The Spectre

OR THE

Mountain of Grenada;

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASWATI MAHAL

A ROMANCE.

IN THREE VOLUMES.

VOL. I.

"Be thou a Spirit of Health, or Goblin damn'd;
Bring with thee airs from Heav'n, or blasts from Hell;
Be thy intent wicked or charitable,——
Thou com'st in such a questionable shape,
That I will speak to thee.——————"

SHAKESPEARE.

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THE TANJORE MAHARAJAH SERFOJI'S SARASVATI MAHAL.

THE SPECTRE

OF THE

Mountain of Grenada.

CHAP I.

IN one of the hottest evenings of the dog-days, Don Fernando of Talavera, accompanied by Count Osma, journied towards the kingdom of Grenada. Being anxious to reach the ancient capital of this beautiful country, they quickened their pace, when suddenly the silence observed by the two friends was interrupted by peals of thunder, and the whole face of nature seemed

convulsed by a dreadful tempest. "How fortunate am I!" exclaimed Fernando, "in witnessing a tempest in the mountain!—How majestically grand is the spectacle!—What an awful glare do those sheets of fire, which rend the clouds, cast upon every object around us!—This is not the triumphal pomp of the queen of the stars!—These flashes are not like the mild beams of the nocturnal luminary!—The lightning is that uncertain guide which marks the traveller's path but for a moment, bringing with it either safety or destruction, dealing out the vengeful thunderbolt, or glaring in the gulf that yawns beneath our feet!—

"My mind, eager for emotion, transportingly imbibes the sublime and terrible ideas which this convulsion of nature is calculated to inspire!—But,

Count Osma," continued Fernando, "you do not reply to my observations; are you a slave to terror, or can you unmoved behold this picture traced by the hand of the Almighty himself?"—

"Death has no terrors for me," replied Osma, in a low and broken voice, "and were it permitted a Christian to court the presence of the grim tyrant, he would ere now have been invoked by me. But, my friend, the sight of such a tempest as this curdles my blood, without scaring my imagination;—it recalls to my mind a certain misfortune. Place me in the face of danger, deprive me of memory, and you will not find your friend wanting in intrepidity!" — Having spoken thus, the Count urged his courser forward like one pursued by the most hideous phantoms. His beha-

viour did not escape the observation of the Marquis of Talavera. He was unable to form an idea of the trouble which agitated the bosom of his friend; but determining to fathom the mystery, he galloped up to him, and thus addressed him: "Unhappy man, whither wouldst thou fly alone, without a guide?"—"To Grenada, to seek shelter from the storm."—"Alas! what can afford you shelter from the storm of your passions?"—"Name it not, young man; you know it not, and may you never know it!—Let us search for an asylum in this mountain; there are deep caverns here that will furnish us what we require."

"Yet, a cavern in the mountain! what do I say?—My senses are bewildered,—my blood boils,—the tempest is redoubled,—and that within my heart rages with increased fury. Must

I then die without again beholding him? Without tasting the sweets of vengeance?"

Astonished at the wildness of his manner, Fernando cast a regard of pity on his friend. A vivid flash of lightning illumined his features; they were ghastly and livid; his eyes rolled in horrid frenzy, his nervous limbs shook violently under him, and cold perspiration coursed down his visage.

Now, for the first time, did fear become an inmate of the Marquis of Talavera's bosom. He was unacquainted with the particulars of his friend's life. Chance had brought them together; a similarity of sentiment had united them, and the same object led them towards Grenada. Don Fernando, a stranger to mistrustful curiosity, conceived he might without danger form an acquaintance with a

man whose conduct, manners, and morals seemed to be above reproach.

During the journey the Marquis had not hitherto perceived any alteration in the behaviour of his friend; he was generally serious, sometimes sad, but never boisterous. His conversation was sensible, instructive and pleasing. He had successfully cultivated the fine arts, of which he was a passionate admirer, and his every opinion harmonized with the sentiments of Don Fernando, who, with all the easy credulity of inexperience, had conceived a strong attachment towards his chance acquaintance.

It is true, that the oddness of the connection, and of the manner in which it was brought about, gave it a peculiar charm in the eyes of Fernando, who was capricious and fantastical in the extreme. He was passionately

fond of the marvellous; unexpected events never failed to give him pleasure; simplicity fatigued him; and reason, in his estimation, was cold and dismal. He looked upon an uniform mode of life as a punishment; his imagination was warm, his head romantic, and his ideas exaggerated: ever the plaything of the caprices of his genius, and the ardour of his passions, he loved to distraction, and he hated with infernal fury. In short, he knew but those two situations of the mind when he was happy, and no sooner was the turbulence of his emotions calmed than a deadly languor seized upon his faculties.

From this sketch of Don Fernando's character, it will readily be imagined, that his acquaintance with Count Osma presented him with numerous charms. We shall not at present dilate

upon this subject, as the imminent danger which threatens one of our heroes will not permit us to lose sight of him for a moment. Hereafter it shall be our duty to enumerate the perils and pleasures, which characters like that of Don Fernando engender in social life. His story will possibly interest the reader who possesses feeling, and will perhaps afford an useful lesson to this frivolous age, which, attending only to the voice of passion, yields incontinently to all the effervescence of a heated imagination.

CHAP. II.

WHILE the tempest of the mountain seemed to abate, that which raged in the bosom of Osma momentarily augmented. His expressions became perfectly incoherent, his voice underwent a total change, and his looks were, if possible, more haggard than ever. Don Fernando, deeply affected by his situation, endeavoured to discover some place whence he might derive succour;

but in vain. The most hideous solitude reigned around; yawning gulfs, menacing rocks, and nodding towers of snow are the only objects that meet the traveller's eye in the mountains of Grenada. Fernando had admired those objects a few minutes previous to the storm, but, as by a clap of thunder, his ideas were instantaneously changed; he now found himself hopeless, uneasy, and tormented by the most dismal forebodings.

His courser wandered about at random, nor did he indeed seem to heed its progress, when suddenly the sound of a passing bell struck upon his ear. "Gracious heaven!" he exclaimed, "I hear the hour of repose announced! It is the curfew bell!"—"It is not so to me," replied the Count, uttering at the same time a long-drawn sigh; "I am convinced it is a funeral

bell. Ah! tell them to await me;—I sink with her to the peaceful tomb—is it not here that her cold clay rests!" cried the unhappy man, raising his gelid hand towards the horizon. At this moment, the sun having vanquished the tempestuous clouds, sank, as it were triumphantly, into the bosom of Thetis. Its disk marked its descent with numberless brilliant hues; and that planet, most friendly to the midnight wanderer had already begun its nocturnal course, like the timid virgin, who tremblingly sheds her favours into the lap of indigence, fearful of wounding where she meaus to heal.

The contrast between the calm of all nature and his mental agitation rent the heart of poor Fernando. He now found himself alone amid the wilds of an unknown region, burthened with

the charge of a lunatic, for whose bewildered head he could not even find a resting place. Fernando! luckless Fernando! thou hast sighed after lively emotions, unforeseen dangers, and singular incidents,—and heaven has seconded thy desires. Proceed yet a few steps more in the path of life, and thou wilt call aloud for repose; thou wilt find, but too late, how senseless are the desires of men, when passion is their only guide.

The Marquis of Talavera once more heard the bell, whose former vibration had winged hope to his lacerated bosom. "This mountain," said he, "is surely inhabited by some hospitable hermit. O God, the sole protector of the wandering and benighted traveller, direct our steps to his lone mansion;—let me but hear the sound of the human voice, clothed in the

harmony of pity, and I will no longer lament my fate !"—Fernando had scarcely concluded this moving petition, ere he beheld the figure of a man clad in a simple garb pacing the summit of a steep rock. In one hand he held a book, and in the other, a stick shod with iron. His progress was slow, and his eyes were fixed upon the earth.

The passions seemed to have exercised their fatal influence over him too; and it was only necessary to behold him in order to judge that he possessed feeling, for he was evidently the child of woe. Charmed at this happy incident; the Marquis flew to meet the stranger; not knowing but that he should find him to be a pilgrim like himself, capable only of bestowing a tear upon his melancholy state. This, however, was immaterial; Fernando had found a man in the desart, and

that man instantly became his brother and his friend.

Count Osma noticed the exultation of his companion, and regarding him with a sorrowful air, exclaimed: "You behold a shadow. Like that of Ossian, it advances towards us enveloped in a light veil. Is it thou, O gentle Malvina, that descendest from the palace of Odin to mingle thy tears with thy father's? Doubtless thou art moved only by the impulse of filial affection. Malvina, Malvina, return to thy blessed abode, and send thence, in pity to a poor traveller, that dêrial object for which he pants."—The echo of the mountain reverberated this energetic supplication, uttered in the most forceful and passionate accents. It struck upon the ear of the stranger, as he pursued his way in silence, and seemed to startle him. He raised his eyes, and

fixing them stedfastly upon the travellers, exclaimed, in evident astonishment: "That voice! those features! Great God,—it is he!"—As he pronounced these words he prepared to make a precipitate retreat; but this he was prevented from doing by Fernando, who rushed towards him, and clasping his hands together, thus addressed him:

"For pity's sake,—if you possess an atom of feeling,—succour me, succour that wretched man, whose delirium has almost deprived me of my senses!"—"Who are you, sir?" demanded the stranger, "say what I may do to serve you?" "Help me to find an asylum for my unhappy friend." "There is no asylum against remorse."—"Great God! is *he* then a guilty wretch?"—"To Heaven I commit the office of punishing the

wicked, and of unveiling their black designs."—"Is the friend of my heart of that number?"—"You will learn to know him at the day of judgment."—"Is there no remedy for his situation?"—"Blot out, if you can, the deeds of his past life."—"Your mysterious expressions freeze my blood. The Count Osma is dying. Will you refuse to afford him succour?"—"No, no, sir;—I will not repulse the friendship that implores aid, nor the misfortune which demands succour. Your friend shall have all the assistance I can afford him. The day perhaps will come, when you may be enabled justly to appreciate the performance of that office which you now impose upon Hernando."—As he concluded the sentence, the stranger advanced towards Count Osma, whom he reached just in time to catch the unhappy tra-

veller in his arms, who was so completely exhausted by fatigue, and overcome by the effects of a burning fever, that he was no longer able to keep the saddle. Hernando shuddered, and a livid hue pervaded his visage, when the distorted head of the Count dropped upon his palpitating bosom.

The Marquis of Talavera, perceiving the constraint under which he laboured, and the dreadful sensations he endured, stepped forward in order to assist him in supporting his friend. "My residence, sir," said Hernando, "is not very far from this place. Do you remain here with the Count, watch over him carefully, and I will return home, and send a domestic with a proper litter and a couple of mules to convey him to my retreat. Friendship is not the host that will open the door to him, but he will find compassion there to

soothe his woes. I trust that my skill, mean as it is, may be capable of saving his life; and believe me, that if I can effect that point, notwithstanding the ———————." He did not wait to finish the sentence; but rushing precipitately forward, left Don Fernando in utter astonishment at the ambiguity of his expressions. Who, thought he, is this man whom Providence has thrown in my way; what reason has he for hating the Count; and what will be the catastrophe of this strange adventure?--These were points respecting which the Marquis could scarcely form a conjecture: his surmises were numerous, but not one of them bore the stamp of probability.

Overcome with fatigue, uneasiness, and sorrow, the hapless Fernando seated himself upon the summit of a steep rock, the head of the unfortunate

Osma resting upon his bosom. Night slowly advanced, and at intervals the distant sound of a bell noted the hour of repose. How tardy did the pace of time appear to Fernando in this solitude. The tremendous rattle of an avalanche tumbling into an abyss was the only noise that broke an appalling silence. This quickly ceased, and the same stillness which had frozen the blood of the poor traveller, again reigned around. "It is thus," cried Fernando, "that the days of man are buried in the deep abyss of eternity! of them remain no more traces than of those enormous pyramids of congealed snow, which year after year vanish away to make place for others; it is thus, that till that dreadful final day, when worlds must sink into nonentity, every thing will by turns ap-

pear upon, and vanish from the face of the earth.

"How many travellers have, like me, admired the surrounding scenery, who are now no more; and I, encompassed as I am by images of death, by how frail a tie is my existence attached to this transitory globe!"—As the Marquis uttered the last word, Osma gave a convulsive groan, exclaiming; "No more moralizing, no more moralizing!" He could say no more. Again he fainted away. His friend was a prey to torment the most excruciating; he knew not how to render him assistance, nor where to find him an asylum in so vast a solitude. The stranger had not again made his appearance, and courage, as well as hope, now began to abandon the mind of Fernando. Uncertain how he should act, and fearful

of quitting Count Osma, he remained, riveted, as it were, by a magic spell, to that place where he had first heard the voice of pity.

The Marquis of Talavera, on the mountain of Grenada, exhibited a lively representation of those fantastical heroes, whom some invisible genius delights in scaring, without being able to seize upon them, or to subdue them to his mysterious empire.

CHAP. III.

NIGHT had now drawn her sable veil over the face of nature; the sweeping wind, mingled with the sound of a neighbouring torrent, formed a dismal concert, while the screaming ospray, emboldened by the approach of darkness, issued from its retreat, and took possession of its nocturnal domain.

Never before had such sounds disturbed the mind of Fernando; but, situated as he now was, every thing

tended to make a gloomy impression upon his imagination. He started up, and in an under tone earnestly besought the tutelary guardian of the wandering pilgrim to afford him protection. His petition was received. The barking of a dog was distinctly heard, and seemed to him the signal of approaching aid.

Fernando was not mistaken, and ere long the slow but sure pace of the mountain coursers was perfectly audible. The voice of human beings next struck upon his ear, and soon the resinous pine branch sheds around its directing rays, and points out the path which leads to an hospitable asylum. Fernando no longer doubts; a paternal deity watches over him and his friend; the moment of trial is over, and to it succeeds the mild reign of mercy. What pen can justly describe the feelings of the too sensitive Fer-

nando at this moment! He eagerly and rapidly questions his guide, yet heeds not his replies; endeavours to excite compassion in favour of his unhappy friend, and expresses his gratitude with a warmth bordering upon frenzy. Hernando readily discovered how ardent and passionate a temper Fernando had received from nature, and the reflection drew from him a sigh.

"How unfortunate is this youth destined to be!" he exclaimed; "and though the storm of passion may have hitherto passed over his early days, how dreadful will be its future ravages!" The sequel of our work will prove whether Hernando formed a just opinion of the Marquis of Talavera, and his fate. After a tedious and unpleasant march, the travellers reached the opposite side of the mountain,

where they found a neat house, equally unornamented and convenient.

The appearance of this desolated dwelling was picturesque in the extreme; the interior was rather commodious than elegant, and displayed none of those superfluities which luxury has invented, and the progress of effeminacy rendered necessary. It neither exhibited mirrors, gildings, nor paintings. The beautiful tissue of the cachemire carpet gave place to a thick kind of matting, so closely wrought as to exclude the sharp and biting air of the mountain. The ornaments of the little parlor in which Osma was placed, consisted of garlands of preserved flowers hung around in festoons, books, chemical instruments, an oaken chest unpolished by the hand of man, and a rude bed hastily constructed for the reception of the unfortunate traveller.

Fernando remained for some time in utter astonishment at what he saw. He could not attempt to put any questions to his host, yet he earnestly desired to ascertain the motives which induced a man, (whose language, manners, and appearance announced that he was designed to fill a different situation,) to seek retirement in an absolute desert. Absorbed in reflection, the Marquis forgot to make any inquiry respecting the state of his friend; when Hernando, supposing him to be occupied with that subject alone, drew near to him, and taking him aside, told him in an affecting tone: "Sir, I cannot conceal from you that Count Osma is excessively ill indeed."—"Excessively ill! O heavens!" exclaimed Fernando, shocked at his having indulged in reflection upon any subject, except the danger which threatened

his friend; "O my God, when my ardent vows craved but a single friend, didst thou hear them only to have the cruel satisfaction of tearing him from me?—O, no.—Thou God of bounty, forgive my impious blasphemy! Thou wilt restore to me the chief object of my affection; Osma will not perish. On his recovery, we will chaunt in unison, at the foot of thine altar, the sacred hymn of gratitude!"—

As he uttered these words in an inspired tone, Fernando fell upon his knees beside the bed on which Osma seemed to struggle with death; he grasped his burning hand, and pressing it against his heart, seemed desirous of snatching thence its superabundance of life, in order to bestow it on his friend. The virtuous Hernando, touched by his conduct, attempted to take the hand of Fernando in testimony of

his feeling, but unluckily seized that of the stranger. He instantly uttered a scream of horror, and disappeared, without uttering a single word.

The Marquis perceived his emotion and his flight: but so completely was his mind harrowed up by the awful words which he had heard a few minutes before, that curiosity found no place in his bosom, now wholly occupied by terror and sorrow. Absorbed in the most dismal reflections, and left entirely to himself, Fernando could not think of the catastrophe which menaced him, without experiencing the strongest sensations of horror. At this moment, an old female domestic of the stranger entered the apartment, and presenting him with a letter, said: "My master, Sir, desired me to hand you this. He cannot for the remainder of the night enjoy your society; but

he has ordered me to supply you with whatever you require, excepting eggs, flesh-meat, and game ; for animal food is never made use of under this roof. I, however, make excellent cheeses ; the dried fruits which I preserve, are highly esteemed even at Grenada ; and the King of Spain himself has never tasted finer vegetables than those that grace my master's table."—The good Margara might have continued to eulogize her talents without experiencing any interruption on the part of Fernando, who mechanically took the letter which she presented to him, silently permitted her to serve up supper, of which he was resolved not to taste, and scarcely seemed to notice her departure.

For nearly an hour, he remained in the same state of immobility, at the end of which Margara, imagining that

no person capable of reading a sentence could resist the pleasure of perusing a letter, or refuse to eat, when a well covered table stood before him, once more made her appearance, in order to request an answer to the epistle, and to take away the remains of the supper. Great indeed was her surprise to behold Fernando in the very same posture in which she had left him. "My God!" exclaimed poor Margara, "this traveller is as mad as his companion; that is certain." This exclamation drew the Marquis out of his deep reverie, and he replied with a sigh, "I am not mad, but I am very miserable. My good woman, did you ever love in the early period of your life?"—"Yes, truly;" replied the old woman, in an angry tone, "and let me tell you that period is not so distant as you may imagine. You think I am

old, I suppose?"—At this moment her master's bell rang violently, and the old lady retired, muttering as she shut the door; "This stranger is certainly short-sighted;—he takes *me* for a toothless old woman!"

It was not till after her departure that Fernando thought of reading the letter of Hernando. It ran thus: "I presumed too much on my courage and my virtue, when I promised you that I would afford Osma all the succour in my power. On finding him so ill this evening, my weak heart was surprised by a certain emotion, the very recollection of which makes me shudder. I shall set out for Grenada at break of day to-morrow, and thence will send you a more skilful and less interested physician than myself. My hand, guided by passion, might possibly commit an irreparable fault—I say a fault, for

there is no danger of my committing a crime. Hernando is virtuous; I will venture to attest it. Were the danger which threatens Count Osma more urgent than it is, I would have acted singly; but a night's repose will only have the effect of calming his agitated senses. May he to-morrow recover his reason, you your accustomed tranquillity, and I that peace of mind which Osma has torn from me for ever! I shall remain at Grenada so long as you and your friend stand inneed of the protection of my roof; perhaps, after your departure, I shall never return thither; this will entirely depend upon chance, upon circumstances, upon the state of my mind. Adieu, thou incomparable friend! Why did not heaven afford the unfortunate that consolation which it has lavishly bestowed upon the guilty! You may rule here as if you

were master of the mansion. Margara will punctually obey you in every respect. You need not question her. She knows nothing of me either past or future. Burn this note."

CHAP. IV.

The precaution prescribed by Hernando was wholly useless. Count Osma could neither be accessible to curiosity, nor was he was capable of forming any conjectures respecting his situation; suffering as he did under the pangs of a burning fever, the delirium of his senses bound up his reasoning faculties.

Before Hernando quitted the house,

he left a composing draught for his unhappy guest, to be taken every quarter of an hour. The sorrowful Fernando passed the remainder of a tedious night of torment in alternately gazing upon his friend, and upon the hour-glass which regulated his motions. Occupied in administering the salutary beverage, and mournfully awaiting its effects, he perhaps suffered more even than his friend; and being sensible, more clearly conceived the horror of their situation. About five o'clock in the morning, the fever seemed to be abated, a tranquil slumber succeeded to the former state of inquietude, and consolatory hope once more sought refuge in the bosom of Fernando.

The first favourable omen was soon followed by another not less propitious. The assistance promised by Hernando

arrived, and the physician was soon introduced to the Marquis of Talavera. Don Emanuel Lopedo, so was the physician named, need only have appeared before Fernando to inspire him with confidence in his skill. Good nature was depicted in his every feature, tinctured by a slight shade of melancholy, resulting from the spectacle of dead and dying which daily met his eyes. His demeanour was grave without being offensively harsh; prudence seemed to hang upon his lips, and circumspection guided his opinion. As alive to pity as the angel of life, he wept in concert with the unhappy friend, whilst he endeavoured to administer comfort to the invalid.

Sublime is the office of the physician; an office founded upon the fragility of our existence, supported by experience, and exercised by virtue.

How necessary art thou to the infirmity of the proud man, and how dear oughtest thou not to be to him, were it not that gratitude is an onerous burthen to the unfeeling heart! Cold derision, insolent contempt, a reluctantly given and frequently disputed fee, bitter complaints and unjust reproaches, are oftentimes the acquittance of a debt, contracted in the moment of danger. Like to those navigators, who, when the storm is over, break to pieces the altar, before which, while the tempest raged, they had addressed their vows; the ungrateful man libels the healing art to which he owes the prolongation of his days, and averts his regards from the bold and dexterous hand which dared to dispute his frail existence with the tyrant, Death.—The Marquis of Talavera was too feeling, too noble, too generous to

participate in prejudices so unjust towards a class of men who devote their lives to the service of their fellow creatures; and he received Don Emanuel as if he were a celestial envoy commissioned by mercy to restore to him his friend.

Eager to learn his opinion respecting the situation of Osma, he conducted him to the couch on which the latter reposed. Emanuel approached the bed of dolour with a countenance indicative of the tenderest pity, and which at this moment more than ever endeared him to Fernando. Having attentively examined the invalid, he turned to the Marquis, and said: "Hernando has formed a correct judgment of the state of your friend. A moral affection, too long concentrated, has caused the dreadful explosion which menaces his life with de-

struction ; a heart-rending recollection, too suddenly recalled, has deranged the equilibrium of his senses. He requires rest, regimen, few medicines, and much gentle treatment. He stands in need of something more ;" continued Emanuel, with a sigh, " he stands in need of mental peace ; and who is the man that can pour this balm into the soul of his fellow creature ? This grand prerogative belongs to God alone."—" O," exclaimed the Marquis, " did I but know the means of procuring him felicity, how happy should I esteem myself ! Nor pains, nor fatigues, nor dangers should cost me a moment's reflection. With the prince of British poets let me exclaim :"—

O happiness !
Plant of celestial seed : if dropt below,
Say in what mortal soil thou deign'st to grow."

Pope's Essay on Man.

The inspired tone in which the young Marquis pronounced the beautiful invocation of the bard, taught the physician to know, that in order to still the imagination of his patient, it was necessary he should have another attendant and friend. "Sir," said he, mildly addressing the Marquis; "if I may credit appearances, you are passionately fond of poetry as well as of your friend. Are you a poet?" This question, which, situated as he then was, seemed to him a bitter sarcasm, caused Fernando to bend an angry eye upon the physician. After a moment's pause, however, he assumed moderation sufficient to reply: "I suppose, Sir, the Signor Hernando has not prevailed upon Don Emanuel to quit Grenada, and his patients in that city, merely to satisfy what I conceive to be idle curiosity. You will oblige

me, therefore, by prescribing for my friend whatever you deem best adapted to his situation I believe, Don Emanual, that you will subscribe to the justness of this suggestion." "I think, Sir, I already told you," replied Don Emanuel coolly, "that the noble stranger has more need of repose than of medicine. I may possibly prescribe bleeding this evening; but that will entirely depend upon the way in which he may pass the day. I must now return to Grenada to watch over greater dangers, and to soften more agonizing dolours than those of your friend. I shall repeat my visit to-morrow, and, if the case require it, will pass the night in the hospitable mansion of Hernando."— "Then you are about to leave us?" said Fernando in evident agitation; while his anger vanished at the bare

idea of being again left to his own gloomy reflections, his eyes filled with tears. "My absence will not be very long," returned Emanuel, who was affected by the uneasiness which the Marquis evinced; "and moreover I repeated, Sir, that at present no imminent danger seems to threaten your friend."—"Not at present, perhaps;" said Fernando, "but should any ensue whilst you are away, of whom am I to crave assistance; from whom may I obtain it?" "From Heaven," exclaimed Emanuel, with firmness truly noble.

"A short distance from this house is situated the rustic church, and the still more rustic residence of the vigilant pastor of a faithful flock. An eagerness to minister to every species of misfortune, has induced him to study the difficult but salutary

science of medicine. The ardent and affecting charity which has caused him to conceive so noble a project, has likewise furnished him with strength to overcome all obstacles. Prudence is his conductor, reflection his guide, religion his monitor. In default of science he calls in the aid of zeal, and Heaven not unfrequently accords that success to its minister, which it denies to the mere physician."—" What an angel!—what a treasure, does Heaven bestow upon mankind," exclaimed Fernando, " when it sends among them pontiffs similar to the man whose portrait you have so ably sketched!" " He, Sir," resumed Emanuel, will be my substitute in the hour of tribulation. Though I now quit you, I do not leave you alone; the envoy of Heaven will sojourn here with the suffering invalid, and the feeling friend.

His pious eloquence will charm away his misfortune, whilst his art will destroy the germ of agony."

"Generous Emanuel, how noble a vengeance dost thou take for the capricious burst of anger in which I indulged."

"Don Fernando, you are in trouble, you are unhappy, you are sad,—could I, under such circumstances, imbibe an unfavourable opinion of you by your conduct?"

As he uttered these words, Emanuel took the route for Grenada, after having examined the state of the invalid, prescribed some mild and soothing remedies, and promised to return before night. Tranquillized by the promise of a visit from the mountain-pastor, Fernando, without undressing, cast himself upon a camp-bed placed

near that of his friend, and drowsiness stealing over his senses, he for a period lost the consciousness of his uneasiness.

CHAP. V.

In conformity to the promise which he had made to Don Fernando, Emanuel visited the curate, ere he returned to Grenada. He found the venerable pastor in the midst of an innocent group of the children of the mountain, among whom he was dispensing the maxims of eternal life. In pious, but simple language, he explained to them the wonders of creation, the benefits arising from regeneration,

and the miracles of divine love. Surrounded by his faithful auditors, the vigilant pastor exhibited the most affecting, the purest sight, that religion can produce on earth;—charity without bounds, and necessity without complaint, succour given without ostentation, and received without degradation, eternal benefits conferred without lassitude, and repaid by gratitude which nothing was capable of shaking.

Don Emanuel had several times beheld this picture of primeval goodness, worthy to be traced by the hand of an angel; but though familiar to him, it at this moment had an unusually powerful effect upon his mind. He had but just quitted the house where two unhappy beings, the sport of the human passions, uttered the language of woe; and had proceeded

but a few paces ere he beheld the sanctuary of the Almighty, and witnessed the calm content and unaffected happiness which beamed from the countenances of the minister and his unsophisticated scholars.—The religious instructions which Father Jerome was bestowing upon the youthful mountaineers not being quite concluded, he motioned him to be seated near the other auditors. Emanuel hesitated not to comply with this invitation.

Hear this ye proud and haughty beings, who, vain of your science, dare to dispute with the Almighty from whom ye derive your talents,—who, in the warmth of self-opinion, will dare to say to him, " Thy secrets are no longer mysteries to us; our prespicacious eyes pierce the thunder and lightning which encompass thee, and behold thine essence !"

Ye will doubtless imagine that the skilful physician of Grenada shared your absurd notions, and blushed at the idea of inclining his head in presence of the preacher of the doctrine of humility!—Oh, undeceive yourselves;—very different thoughts filled the mind of the most learned and enlightened physician in Spain.

Don Emanuel d'Opedo possessed the heart of a christian, before he had developed the sublimity of his genius. It was this christian heart that on the present moment whispered to him how far more pleasing to the Almighty was a long life of innocence and purity, commenced in the shade of holy retirement, than all the science possessed by the men of the schools;—hence it was that he hesitated to range himself under the banner of spotless virtue, or to take a place among the sons of in-

nocence. A new reflection, however, re-assures him:—nor did this reflection proceed from the vanity of the mind, it sprang from the goodness of his heart. The crowd of hapless beings, whose lives he had preserved, whose existence he had prolonged, rush upon his imagination;—he thinks he hears that concert of ejaculations and benedictions which ascends to the throne of Heaven in return for his consolatory cares;—and conceiving himself worthy of being admitted into the number of the elect, he fearlessly mingles with the group of terrestrial angels that surround him.

Having finished his instructions, the sage Jerome dismissed his youthful neophytes, enjoining them to attend to their rural occupations. He now proceeds to spread a frugal repast before his friend, and next inquires to

what lucky incident he is indebted for his presence. "For," added the pastor, "our hours, if not occupied by the practice of virtue, are so taken up with mundane concerns, that we rarely catch an opportunity of enjoying each other's society."

"Ah! my worthy friend," replied Emanuel, "I do trust, that though I am absent, your wishes accompany me invariably amidst that tumult of worldly affairs, in which my profession involves me, and that from the bosom of solitude your mental regards are not unfrequently directed to the poor navigator who is tossed to and fro by the billows of busy life."

"Yes, my son," said the pious recluse, sighing profoundly, "I do beseech Heaven to bless your labours, and while it accords to your genius the success which it merits, to preserve

your heart, formed for virtue, from the poison of vanity. But tell me," continued the curate, in a less solemn tone, "is it a need of advice, or to receive a few merited reproaches, or to see your friend after a long absence, that you pay me so early a visit?"—"Your advice," replied Emanuel, "will ever be valuable in my estimation;—as to reproaches, I will not pretend to say that I do not deserve them; but I must own that I do not come here to-day to seek either censure or counsel. Chance, or rather Providence, has conducted two wandering travellers to this mountain. The sad and unhappy Hernando has received them. I know not who they are; but certain it is, that the presence of one of them has recalled some painful recollection to the mind of our friend, who yesterday quitted his solitary abode,

and appeared in the gay and populous city of Grenada." "Without having previously seen me!" exclaimed Jerome, "without confiding to me the cause of his dissatisfaction, and the motives which produced his unlooked for emigration! His conduct really surprises me. Like you, I cannot imagine what it is that has caused Hernando thus suddenly to forego all his resolves. But from whom had you this unexpected piece of intelligence." "From our friend himself. This morning, at the dawn of day, whilst all Grenada was wrapped in profound repose, Hernando appeared before me,—gloomy, his eyes rolling, his visage pale and cadaverous. He flung himself into my arms, exclaiming: Emanuel! virtuous Emanuel! save thy friend from the contemplation of a crime. It was but yesterday even-

ing that a beam of savage joy shot across my mind on beholding a man, my fellow creature, expiring at my feet!'—'Thou, Hernando,' said I to him;—thou the mildest,—the most feeling,—the best of human beings!—No,—I cannot possibly believe what you tell me. An unpleasing vision abuses your better sense;—recover your self-possession, my friend; recollect yourself.'—'I saw him,—I saw him,'—returned Hernando;—he was dying——'and the desire of vengeance flashed across my mind!'

"Here Hernando paused, and striking his forehead violently, strode repeatedly across the floor. Then approaching me, he added, in a milder tone, and a more settled accent;—'Hear me, Emanuel: a service must be rendered to suffering humanity which it imperiously demands at my hands,

but I have not virtue sufficient to execute it. Set off instantly for the mountain;—in that solitary asylum, where I hoped to have found repose, you will behold two wretched beings. One of them is ill;—I recommend him to your care, and to the pious charity of the generous-minded Jerome. Afford the dying wretch every species of consolation;—leave *me* to my unhappy fate!'

"Such, my worthy friend, were the last words that I heard him utter. He quitted me almost immediately, declining to enter into any further explanation, either on the subject of his former misfortunes or his future plans. All that I could gather from him was that he would not leave Grenada without seeing you once more, and imparting to you the nature of his intentions. If I mistake not, the unexpected pre-

sence of the strangers has entirely overturned the late projects of Hernando."

"Your narrative, Emanuel," replied the curate, "makes me entertain strange suspicions. Some mystery hangs about this affair which time may possibly elucidate. Return you to Grenada, and pursue the painful duties of your calling;—in the mean time I will visit the unfortunate strangers. Thanks to your intelligence and instruction, I can afford the poor invalid some assistance at least; and whilst my hand, directed, I trust, by Heaven, eases his physical sufferings possibly the divine truth of the gospel may restore peace to his mind."—"Yes," exclaimed Emanuel, enthusiastically," if yet the delirium of his senses may be allayed, and he have strength sufficient to hearken to

your precepts, he will be saved! Where is there a heart so hardened, a mind so savage, that can resist the holy and sublime unction which drops from your lips? God himself seems to have lodged his all-powerful strength in your words, his bounty in your heart, and his every mean of consolation in your very appearance!"

To this affecting, yet correct eulogium, which the humble pastor conceived to be exaggerated, he made no reply; but bowing his head before the image of him, who, whilst on earth, received only opprobrium and maledictions, in return for benefits conferred, he seemed hurt at being better treated than his divine master.

Emanuel judged by his silence that he had wounded the pious modesty of the religious;—respectfully squeezing the hand of his worthy friend, he ut-

tered a few words of excuse, and departed, penetrated with admiration at that sublime virtue, which would shrink from the eulogy and approbation that it inspires, with more anxiety and dread, than the proud man hearkens to the censure which he merits.

Left alone, Jerome immediately prepared to wait upon the unhappy persons, who at that moment possibly demanded his aid. He accordingly set out for the dwelling of Hernando, regretting, as he quickened his pace, that he had not been with his friend, ere the hideous form of misfortune stood before him, in order to fortify him against that despondency with which it but too frequently inspires timid mortals.

CHAP. VI.

THE good curate pursued his way to the house of Hernando. He well knew that he should not meet his old friend there, and that the mild sympathy and amiable confidence which used formerly to greet his entrance no longer dwelt there. He was certain, however, that misfortune had taken up its residence at the violated mansion, and this idea alone sufficed to hasten his progress. This sentiment, which so

powerfully operated upon his mind, was not mingled with any terrestrial motive, although the recital of Emanuel had prepared him to witness scenes to which he had till then been an utter stranger.

Curiosity had no hold upon his imagination, for his heart had long been dead to the transactions of worldlings, and his mind insensible to the vanities of the age. All those passions which agitate and disturb the minds of men in general appeared feeble to him in comparison to the grand idea which alone occupied his mind. Time was when many things passed in review before his mental vision, and left deep impressions upon his heart; but for a considerable period he might be likened to the louring rock washed by the impetuous waves, which unmoved beholds the foaming sea break

upon its base without attaining to its summit.

To arrive at this tranquil state, the austere Jerome had inured himself to the wild and uncultivated waste of the mountain of Grenada. The most brilliant genius of the age in which he lived, the most erudite man in Spain, the man who possessed the sublimest of talents, chose as his associates a congregation of ignorant herdsmen; his only pleasure consisted in austere occupations, his only repose was never-ending cares;—in short, to avoid the dangers consequent on worldly vanity, he condemned himself to the cruel punishment of holding no sort of trivial converse with those around him, and, in shunning the world, deprived himself of the consolations peculiar to solitude; for, in fact, absolute solitude is infinitely preferable to the torment

of apparently living in society, without having a single companion whose disposition assimilates with your own, a mind capable of entertaining those sensations which you feel. But the master whom he served was not unmindful of his servant's disinterested sacrifices, and whilst he aided him in accomplishing them, he prevented him from feeling all their bitterness.

Jerome imagined that he should fully find his God in the mountain, but Providence threw a friend and fellow-creature in his way. Hernando needed the consolatory advice of the pastor, and the attentions of the latter were amply repaid by the attachment of Hernando. But this pleasure, which he had renounced from conscientious motives, and which Heaven had bestowed upon him in exchange for his fidelity, the sweet satisfaction

of being beloved, of being heard and understood, never induced the pious Jerome to neglect the duties which his station imposed upon him.

The friend never rendered him forgetful of the children, on the contrary, the mind of Hernando and that of the pastor of the mountain were only united to do good. It was in the midst of this affecting exercise of every virtue that the unexpected meeting with Osma and Fernando took place.

We have already related the leading effects of their arrival in this peaceful solitude;—proceed we now with our recital, and let us witness the result of what has transpired. The charitable Jerome rapidly advanced towards the mansion of suffering, where he was destined to experience the most lively astonishment. Already he had crossed the threshold of

Hernando's humble hermitage. Fernando, kneeling beside the sick bed of his friend, was in the act of presenting him with the salutary draught, whilst with one arm he supported the enfeebled head of the wretched patient: at this moment the door of the apartment opened, and the messenger of heaven entered, invested with the twofold power of healing and absolving. He advanced slowly, while Fernando, wholly occupied in the performance of his friendly office, remained unconscious of the presence of the pastor, till a deep sigh from the latter attracted his attention. Equally enchanted and affected at that species of celestial virtue, which guides the good pastor in search of other sheep beside those of his own fold, which directs his hand in probing their moral wounds, Fernando turns his eyes upon

his comforter, and recognises in him a guide, a father, a master, and a friend.

The excess of his feelings at this discovery almost deprived him of life, sense, and motion, and he remained in mute astonishment, whilst the good pastor in evident surprise exclaimed: "Is it you, then, Fernando, that I once more behold?—Is it you, indeed, that the storms and tempests of the age have cast into this profound solitude?"—"Yes, my father," replied the Marquis of Talavera, "it is the pupil of genuis, the child of your cares, the weak disciple of your virtues, that heaven restores to you!"

"Son, son," replied the pastor, sorrowfully bending his reverend head, "as yet I know nothing; but I tremble when I reflect upon the impetuosity of your passions, and even the fire of your genuis. Ah! Fernando, I

have not waited till this day of distress to lament what I have done for you." "You, my father, acquainted with remorse or repentance! You, whose soul is more pure, more celestial than any that heaven has mercifully deigned to bestow upon mankind."

"Fernando," said the holy man, interrupting the eulogies of the youth, "for a considerable time past my tardy yet galling foresight has filled me with useless regrets for what I have done respecting you. I shudder at having laid open to you, the son, the sanctuary of the muses, and the temple of the arts. Were it not for me, were it not for our unlucky meeting, had you listened to paternal mandates————."—"Rather say caprices!" interposed Fernando.—"No, my child, I have learned but too late, that your father was right in interdict-

ing you the acquirement of pleasing and captivating accomplishments, and in wishing to subject your romantic imagination to the severe ægis of morality, instead of inflaming it still more by the fire of poetry and a taste for painting! But, alas! I myself was an enthusiastic admirer of those enchanting arts, which paternal prudence justly regarded with a jealous eye. I readily recognised in you that instinctive genius which obscurity depresses, which the thirst of glory momentarily devours, and which stands in need of external aids in order to the preservation of him who receives this brilliant but fatal gift of nature. I ventured, in despite of your duties, to initiate you, my son, into those mysteries unfathomed by the vulgar, which so frequently destroy virtue while they exalt the passions. Such

is my trespass; your misfortunes, Fernando, should you ever be unfortunate, will be attributable to him whose duty it was to guide you in the road to salvation."

As he uttered these words in an affecting tone, the worthy religious sighed deeply. The sigh was echoed from the inmost recess of Fernando's heart, which sensibly felt the justness of the good man's fears.

"Father," cried Fernando, falling upon his neck, "be comforted; I am not unfortunate, for I have found you. I shall never be more culpable than I have hitherto been, for in revealing to me the secrets of genius, you have also taught me to appreciate all the charms of virtue."—"Is it true, Fernando, is it true, that during our long and frequent conversation on the arts which you cultivated, I have not suf-

fered you to lose sight of your duty, and that the lessons of the master have not sometimes been unworthy of the religious who inculcated them? O, I would fain hear this avowal from your lips, it would calm the inquietude of a wounded conscience."—"I conjure you, virtuous Jerome, to cease your regret;—were it not for that mild condescension with which your austere virtue so bitterly reproaches you, I should certainly be lost. Cast alone, and without any guide, into the midst of a corrupt world, I should otherwise have begun by adopting its errors, and have ended by participating in its vices; the love of the arts, and a predilection to study, have preserved me from falling a sacrifice to the dangers which encompass inexperience, more especially when it is left without occupation. With the talents

which it has been your care to foster, I have preserved that love of virtue with which your precepts and example inspired me. But, tell me, father, for I am impatient to learn the fact, what extraordinary event has conducted you from the monastery of the Escurial to the solitude of Grenada ?"

"This is not a fit time to give you the information which you require," replied the religious gravely ; "your friend still suffers, and stands in need of our assistance. When the danger that threatens him is passed, I will speak to you about myself, and say a few words to you respecting your future designs. I shall likewise appeal to the generous candour of my pupil for a correct detail of those events which have occurred to him subsequently to our separation. When you have gratified me by this recital, my

confidence will not be withheld. At present we are bound to concentrate our attentions in the misfortune which so loudly demands their exertion; we have perhaps neglected it too long while occupied by the pleasure resulting from so unexpected a meeting.

"Let us, my son, hasten to repair a fault which escaped us in a moment of inadvertency, and let us not suffer any sentiment of joy to occupy our hearts, while one of our fellow-creatures endures agony within our view." As he concluded this observation in a solemn tone, the pious Jerome feelingly drew near to the bed of dolour. As he approached it, Fernando would fain have persuaded himself that the delirium which preyed upon the senses of his unhappy friend would vanish at the sight of his worthy master, whom he imagined heaven had gifted with

superhuman powers; and that the accents of his tongue, indued with the harmony of the celestial choirs, would put torture to flight, and pour the balm of comfort into the mental wounds of the wretched sufferer.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S SARASVATI MAHAL.

CHAP. VII.

The fond hopes which Fernando entertained for his friend were not, however, realized. Some incoherent expressions, annunciative of the agitation and frenzy of him who pronounced them, were the sole fruit of the pastor's charitable endeavours to minister consolation to his patient.

The anguish of the Marquis of Talavera was now at its height; he found himself burdened with the care of a

wretched maniac, far distant from his native country, without seeing any probable term to his misfortunes, or cause for his sufferings. After having carefully examined the patient, Jerome declared himself of the same opinion as Emanuel, namely, that the malady of the stranger resulted solely from mental depression; but what the origin of this depression was, what remedy he should prescribe, or how information on the melancholy subject was to be conveyed to the friends of the invalid, was more than the venerable pastor was capable of divining. Desirous of elucidating a part of the mystery, he proceeded to interrogate Don Fernando, and mildly demanded: "Do you not, my young friend, design to make Count Osma's family acquainted with the melancholy state in which he now lies?" "Most certainly,

I would do so," replied the Marquis of Talavera, "were I acquainted with his family; but———." Here Fernando paused, and changed colour.

The worthy pastor, not seeming to notice his confusion, continued his interrogatories in the following terms: "Though you do not know any of the members that compose his family, you, of course, are acquainted with the country that gave him birth?"—"My God! No."—"How! have you travelled then with a man, respecting whose country, family, and character, you have not the slightest knowledge?"

"I accidentally met the Count in Italy, and there became acquainted with him. I had the happiness to render him an important service; his gratitude on the occasion was most lively, and in the course of a few days

we became the warmest of friends. He informed me that the Counts of Osma originally came from Leghorn, but that he usually dwelt in France, till a certain event led him to the banks of the Tiber. Being wealthy and independent, he consecrated his time to the study of the arts, of which he was a passionate amateur;—and having a peculiar taste for painting, had visited all the countries which boasted the possession of masterpieces in this branch of science. After having travelled over Italy, he told me he designed to visit Spain, for the purpose of making sketches of some ancient monuments in that country; adding, that he was particularly anxious to see Grenada, so celebrated for its antique remains, and for the affecting events which they recall.

"I secretly entertained a similar wish,

and Heaven seemed to second it by offering me a friend capable of beguiling the tedious journey, and meliorating the fatigues of travelling. I, therefore, readily courted the society of Count Osma, without once harbouring a suspicion or doubt respecting the events of his past life, and without entertaining a single fear as to what might happen to me in his company. I laid open my heart to my new friend;--I made him the depositary of my confidence; but I now find that he was rather more on the reserve with me; and I cannot help recollecting how sedulously he has ever avoided making me acquainted with the particulars of his progress through life. From some words which Hernando dropped, it would seem that Osma is a guilty wretch; but what may have been his crimes, I know not.

"Your friend alone can give us information upon this point; and if he can do so, without wounding the sacred rights of misfortune, I am confident he will impart the secret to you. I have nothing more to say, for I have really told you all that I know respecting the unfortunate companion of my journey."—"And that, to say the truth," replied Jerome, "is not very satisfactory. Your recital merely informs me that Don Fernando has, in despite of common reason, connected himself with an unknown person, whom a love for the arts has induced to lead a wandering life, and who, to satisfy his taste, is a stranger in every place. You see, my young friend, the result of your indiscreet conduct: if Heaven in its mercy had not thrown so generous a man as Hernando in your way, and in a strange pastor

taught you to recognise an ancient monitor, you would, in the midst of this desert mountain, have found yourself between an insane friend, and an infuriate foe. The one would not have been able to defend himself, and the other might have securely wreaked the most dreadful vengeance on the defenceless victim.

"What a salutary lesson may you not derive from this hypothesis? I know not what may be the upshot of this adventure, but I trust it will not prove injurious to you;—and that henceforward you will be more circumspect in the choice of your friends, and never again bestow a fond and sacred title upon unknown persons, whom mystery and singularity encompass, and who generally endeavour to veil their errors and crimes by an affectation of eccentricity."—As he delivered this

sage counsel in a paternal tone, the venerable Jerome extended his hand to the young Marquis, who pressed it to his bosom, but was so overcome by his feelings, that he was obliged to quit the apartment.

In the evening Don Emanuel d'Opedo returned from Grenada, and visited his patient of the mountain, whom he found nearly in the same state as he had left him in the morning. Alarmed at finding that what he had hitherto done was of no avail, the skilful physician tried new remedies, which proved equally inefficacious.

The Marquis was almost distracted, and even the salutary counsel of the venerable pastor was incapable of instilling resignation into a mind more sensible to dangers than to pleasures, and more prone to fear than to love. Any attempt to dispel such sensations would merely have had the effect of

increasing them; and, in order to their dissipation, it was necessary that time and tranquillity should be suffered to take their course.

Much affected by the uneasiness of Fernando, Emanuel consented to pass the night with his friend, while Jerome returned to his rural mansion for the purpose of bestowing his attentions upon his innocent flock. Left thus alone beside the bed of sorrow the young Marquis and the physician entered into conversation respecting their venerable friend. They were both ignorant of the motive which had conducted the pastor of the mountain to his humble retreat.

Don Fernando certainly knew that the now calm and resigned Jerome had had his days of trial, and that the storm of the passions had driven him from the brilliant court of Madrid to

the monastery of the Escurial;—but he was at a loss to conceive what other revolution had torn him from the holy altars, in the vicinity of the throne, and exiled him to the depths of solitude. After indulging in various surmises, the doctor and the Marquis changed the subject, and all their ideas and expressions were now confined to Count Osma. The uneasiness of Fernando respecting the situation of his friend rather increased than diminished; while the prudent Emanuel, without endeavouring to inflame an imagination, already too warm of itself, did not attempt to conceal from him that the danger which threatened his friend was so imminent, that, if in the course of two days no alteration for the better took place, he would not undertake to insure his life a single moment.

This was a terrifying annunciation

[library stamp]

to a naturally feeling mind. Days of anguish and anxiety unrelieved by a gleam of hope's benignant ray, how tedious do ye appear to the sorrowful wretch who is doomed to reckon your tardy moments! And yet may not still more bitter misery succeed that which marks your heavy reign!—The Almighty graciously spared Fernando so inexpressibly afflictive a trial; the two probationary days passed over, and the Count Osma still breathed. Emanuel entertained hopes; — and Jerome, with still greater confidence, predicted that the patient would survive his illness. Fernando would scarcely venture to re-open his heart to hope; it had already suffered too much to receive consolation from mere possibility, and nothing but certainty could chase away its anxious fears. The prudent Opedo at length con-

firmed the favourable prognostic of the pastor; Count Osma rapidly recovered, and the tears of friendship, as it would seem, had moved Heaven to work an unlooked-for prodigy. Count Osma now beholds the light of day, reason resumes her throne, calmness once more reigns over his senses, and his mind appears to be wholly engrossed by the gratitude which springs from benefits received at the hands of friendship, from the aid of salutary medicines, and from the sweets of disinterested hospitality.

Rejoiced at recovering his friend, and at finding him in the state in which he was previously to the storm on the mountain, Fernando did not attempt to interrogate him either with respect to the past or the future. He saw that the Count could not prolong bis stay at the residence of a stranger,

whom he had driven thence by his presence, but he resolved upon deferring as long as possible the dreaded moment of explanation upon this point. Hernando seemed to guess at the awkwardness of his situation, and with uncommon delicacy withdrew from Grenada, leaving a short note for the Marquis of Talavera, inviting him to sojourn as long as he pleased in the mountain;—adding, that as he was about to take a journey to Madrid, where he meant to remain some time, he should not stand in need of his hermitage, and that he considered himself happy in finding this occasion to demonstrate to the Marquis of Talavera, how highly he admired his noble conduct towards an unfortunate friend.

This proceeding was so far from relieving Fernando from his embarrassed situation, that it rather increased the

dilemma; the idea of subjecting himself to a protracted obligation on the part of a man who despised his friend, was what his delicacy could not endure. "At least," thought Fernando, "if I were acquainted with the motives of his hatred towards Osma, I might possibly remove or modify them; may not this hatred be the result of misconception, or of unjust prejudices, which a single word, a sentence of explanation might suffice to destroy? Yet, while he loads us with favours, he shuns us, and seems eager only to reserve to himself the hideous right of feeding upon hatred. And do I,—does Don Fernando, dwell under the roof of the foe of my dearest friend!"

The situation was, in effect, rather unpleasing;—but Count Osma, it is true, did not view it in its real light.

He had been told that the asylum in which he found himself belonged to a young physician named Hernando; but the mention of this name did not seem to cause in him any extraordinary emotion;—he even seemed desirous of beholding the generous man, who had extended his hospitality to him; and when informed that he had set out upon a journey, he neither expressed surprize nor curiosity. The Count now gradually recovered his health; and peace and resignation appeared once more to have taken up their abode in his bosom. Mild, amiable, and interesting in every particular, he failed not to charm all around him; and not only delighted, but astonished his visitants by the graces of his mind, the extensiveness of his information, and the variety of his qualifications. It was not merely

for the purpose of attending upon an invalid that Don Emanuel quitted Grenada, but to enjoy the pleasure of conversing with a man, whose discourse was capable of dispelling every gloomy or unpleasing reflection.

The sedate Jerome himself, who had so loudly condemned the conduct of his young friend in forming so perematature a friendship, was in his turn overcome by the irresistible influence of the Count's society, and he admitted that there should be one exception in his favour to the rigid laws of wisdom, which forbid us to form an attachment, ere we have fathomed the situation and character of him, on whom we would bestow the important title of *real friend*.

CHAP. VIII.

SEVERAL days elapsed without producing an alteration in the situation of the two friends. Count Osma had by this time recovered his health and strength, and even assumed a share of gaiety; but he did not seem by any means anxious to prosecute his travels. He appeared reluctant to pass the threshold of the hermitage, although the physician had ordered him to take much exercise; but this,

and this only of his prescriptions did he seem averse to comply with. Though he did not explain the cause of his disobedience in this respect, it was quite perceivable that Count Osma wished to avoid walking about the mountain.

Emanuel himself was fearful of again exposing him to the influence of painful recollections, but being at the same time anxious to familiarize him with the object of his terrors, he one day proposed to him to visit the humble parsonage of Jerome, in return for his numerous visits to the hermitage of Hernando. Count Osma was visibly agitated at the mention of his proposition, and in a trembling voice he demanded, which road led to the parsonage. "The road opposite to that which leads to Grenada," replied Don Emanuel: "the way is very smooth, the surrounding scenery uncommonly

picturesque, and the distance very inconsiderable."—"Alas!" replied the Count Osma, "could you but read my heart,—could you but know what passes in my mind!—I know not how it is, but the aspect alone of this mountain awakens all my recollections. I have been anxious to view Grenada, to behold its antique ruins, to learn its historical traditions, and to feast my eyes on its plains still peopled with glory, misfortune, and love. These would I fain have closely inspected. But oh, my friends, this hideous mountain has dissolved the charm,—I can no longer doubt it. The agitation of my mind tells me that some catastrophe connected with the varied events of my miserable existence has occurred in this solitude. If you know any thing of it, I beseech you, for pity's sake, to tell me what you have learned."

There was so much of terror, grief, and anxiety, depicted in the countenance of the unhappy man, as he pronounced this supplication, that Emanuel almost repented of having invited him to quit the retreat: after a moment's reflection, however, he was convinced that the welfare of his patient required he should be treated with a sort of discreet firmness, in order to prevent him from filling his imagination with superstitious and chimerical ideas, whose influence over his mind might prove so fatal to his repose. He accordingly addressed him to the following effect in a mild tone:--"Do not be surprised, Count, that the terrors consequent upon protracted sufferings still rankle in your mind; morality is more closely connected with the science of medicine than most persons imagine; and the reason of man sel-

dom fails to totter when the health is undermined. Now that your constitution has recovered its accustomed vigour, I cannot permit you to entertain those fantastical notions, which human pride has adorned with the appellation of forebodings, but which, in reality, are merely the effects of physical disorganization.

"This mountain has ever been the peaceful abode of innocence and virtue, nor from time immemorial has any unpleasant circumstance occurred within its confines. Your health has been so much hurt by over-fatigue and tedious journies, that it at last sank in this mountain under a species of exercise but ill suited to your constitution; and the same event would have occurred at Grenada, had you arrived there in due time. Do not, therefore, yield to shadows, to conjectures, which

possess no greater solidity than the oracles of the sybils, or the predictions of quack conjurors."—As he spoke this, Emanuel took the arm of his patient, and led him forth from the hermitage; Fernando supported him on the other side, and the poor traveller, thus situated between firm reason and consolatory friendship, seemed once more to tread the path of life.

THE TANJORE MAHARAJA SERFOJI'S ... MAHAL.

CHAP. IX.

As the experienced physician had rightly foreseen, the picturesque scenery of the mountain stifled instead of recalling the painful recollection of the wanderer. The sight of the rustic church and the modest dwelling of Jerome even appeared to make a most felicitous impression on the mind of the invalid. Tears, which had long been strangers to his eyes, dropped plenteously on the steps of the rudely con-

structed altar, and a heavy burthen was almost instantaneously removed from his heart. As they quitted the church in order to repair to the parsonage, Fernando observed a female, clad in deep mourning, kneeling beside a black marble monument, apparently buried in meditation. A large veil of black crape concealed the features of the mourner; but the Marquis persuaded himself that she could not but be lovely, for she wept; and sorrow, in the opinion of Fernando, was of itself capable of enduing the soft sex with numberless charms. Osma passed by the monument without stopping to notice the interesting mourner. A convulsive movement on the contrary seemed to quicken his pace, whilst Fernando lingered behind with the hope of beholding the features of the female. His design, however, was

frustrated; for nothing seemed capable of diverting the attention of the mourner from her devotions; her sighs alone reached the ear of the sensitive Talavera, and agitated his bosom in a manner till then unknown to him.

Had he hearkened to the suggestions of passion, he would, instead of quitting the church, have remained there till the departure of the weeping stranger; he would have followed her, perhaps have obtained a glimpse of her person, learned her name, her place of residence, the cause of her grief; but to leave the place, to lose sight of her, without gaining any intelligence on a subject which so deeply interested his feelings, was more than he could prevail upon himself to do.—At length, it occurred to him that Jerome might be acquainted with the circumstances of the fate and misfortunes of the

unhappy female. "Perhaps," thought Fernando, "she may be a relative, or at least a friend of Jerome, for whoever may be called the child of misfortune, must be dear to the heart of the true man of God. But," continued he, indulging in his train of visionary surmise, "may it not be possible that the mountain parsonage is her asylum? I will not lose a moment in ascertaining the fact!"—Replete with his resolve, Fernando quitted the church with sensations somewhat short of regret; his brilliant and versatile imagination persuading him, that he quits the object of his pity only for a short period.

On looking around him, he perceived that his friends had already got the start of him. His lonely situation re-assures him; and, retracing his steps, he now gently approaches the fair

stranger, and in accents of the tenderest compassion, thus addressed her: "Lovely mourner, sympathy has emboldened me to trespass upon your holy solitude. This tomb doubtless incloses the object of your fondest wishes; but should you deign to receive an unknown comforter, whom Heaven now presents to you, you shall no longer stand in need of a protector, a companion, a friend." The fair mourner listened to his tender language without testifying either surprise or gratitude. She did not even change her attitude; but, without raising her eyes, or removing her veil, with one hand motioned Fernando to withdraw, and, pointing with the other towards Heaven, the altar, and the tomb, pressed it to her bosom, yet uttered not a single word.

How energetic, how eloquent did

this reply of misfortune to the consolations of pity, appear in the eyes of Fernando! Enchanted by a spell still more powerful than that of love, more irresistible than mere pleasure, the Marquis hesitated to obey the silent mandate; for the destiny of his life seemed to hang upon the chance of obtaining a single regard from the mysterious being who subjugated, while she endeavoured to repulse him.

The stranger, perceiving that he remained immovable in the same place, once more motioned him to retire. "No," cried Fernando, "I cannot, will not quit this sacred place without knowing who she is, whose sorrows have assumed a resistless influence over my very being. Speak to me, madam, I conjure you; let me but hear the sound of that voice, which should be harmonious as a concert of

cherubims, celestial as your spotless mind !"—The fair stranger sighed profoundly, and partly raised her head. This motion did nothing, but it promised much ; at least Fernando persuaded himself so. He renewed his intreaties in so passionate a tone, without however decreasing his respectfulness, that he at length discovered the path which led to the heart he aimed at softening.

The youthful mourner for the first time hears the dangerous language of the passions; she hears it without dismay. Unhappy victim of misfortune ! wouldst thou too become the prey of love ? Alas ! she is incapable of making such a reflection. That which the eloquent voice of sentiment implores her to grant, appears too trifling to be refused ; she consents to yield to intreaty, yet she does not

foresee the probable consequences of her acquiescence. The youthful virgin raises her trembling hand to the veil which disguises her features; she is on the point of removing it. "Ah! let me but see you; let me but hear you speak!" exclaimed the enthusiastic Fernando; "to the accordance of this favour all my wishes are confined."—The stranger hesitates; a secret voice, the voice of reason, whispers her to fly, and hold her peace. But will this suggestion be hearkened to; will it stand before the seducing language of flattery?

Ye youthful beauties,—ye who for the first time hear your charms vaunted, and your influence over the heart of man exaggerated,—would ye, at such a moment, hearken to the salutary instructions, the austere counsels, of a sage monitor?—Almedorina was, per-

haps, about to fall into that snare which flattery lays for the vanity of the sex, when a grave and majestic voice made the sacred vault resound with the name of Fernando. Almedorina instantly recognised this commanding voice, which in a moment dispelled the fairy illusions of self-love. Sorrow and piety again take possession of her spotless mind. Again she prostrates herself before the monumental marble, and her ideas are borne anew on the wings of salutary meditation to the throne of the Everlasting.

The Marquis of Talavera, disconcerted at the annihilation of his hope, sadly contemplates the scene before him, without being able to quit the spot where fate seemed to have fixed him. In the mean time the sage Jerome approached the youth. His look was severe, his deportment com-

manding. Making a sign to the Marquis to follow him, he closed the entrance of the temple, seized his arm, and led him briskly along, without proffering a single word.

Uneasy and confused, poor Don Fernando imitated his silence. The object of his desires had been snatched from him at the moment when he was on the eve of attaining it; a disappointment which became a misfortune in the estimation of a man who was the slave of imagination.

As they entered the parsonage, Jerome said to the chagrined Fernando: "If you wish that I should overlook your conduct, do not speak of that young person before the Count Osma, or question Emanuel concerning her situation."—"Opedo knows her then?" "Be silent, be discreet." — "One word more — Does she inhabit the

mountain ?"—" I neither can, nor ought to satisfy you on that head."—" Then, no human power shall prevent me from following her withersoever she may go. She was about to unveil herself; I should have seen her, I should have heard her, were it not that your appalling voice interposed, and destroyed *my* fair prospect of bliss, and perhaps *her* future felicity. I am determined to speak to her again!"—" Fool! what right have you to trouble the repose of a wretched female, who seeks, and commonly finds consolation, in the bosom of her God? Who are you, ashes and dust, that imagines you are appointed to restore happiness to an afflicted mind? The Almighty, in the immensity of his power, has reserved to himself alone this splendid prerogative; and where grief reigns, the presence of man can

only contribute to its augmentation."

As he uttered this sublime observation in an impressive tone, the worthy pastor rejoined his friends. Fernando followed his example: regret was visibly depicted in every trace of his countenance, but repentance could not find a corner in his heart. The severe admonitions of reason appeared to him tyrannical. Accustomed as he had long been to know no other rule than the caprices of his fancy, to hearken to no other voice than the suggestions of passion, he spurned the idea of having the least of his desires opposed, and could not admit that there existed a single individual who had authority to command or govern him.

The perspicacious Jerome had fathomed his ardent and passionate mind; he trembled for his faults, he foresaw his misfortunes. He already

began to divine a portion of those mysteries which the future is to develope, and bitterly did he lament the hour in which Fernando and Osma entered the parsonage of the mountain. The ever watchful foresight of the sage teaches him to dread misfortunes, but it does not always afford him the means to avoid or prevent them.

CHAP. X.

JEROME having joined his friends, accounted to them for the absence of Fernando in a very plausible manner, while the latter listened with a very bad grace to the pleasantries which Emanuel addressed to him, in order to dissipate the gloom of Count Osma, who had suddenly resumed his accustomed taciturnity.

Fernando was indeed equally silent,

and scarcely attended to the whispers of friendship; while Jerome, in spite of his ordinary self-possession, was hardly capable of concealing the uneasiness which agitated him, till the Count, suddenly recovering from his reverie, requested that he would gratify his friends with a recital of the events which had conducted him to the solitude of the mountain. "Alas!" said the pastor, with a sigh, "you would have me unveil to the eyes of friendship the mystery of my destiny. The task you impose is painful; but I will consent to perform it on one condition, namely, that every person present promises in his turn to relate the history of his life. A sentiment of the tenderest kind unites our hearts, yet we are all strangers to each other; ere the morrow, then, let the envious veil be torn aside.

"Count Osma, Fernando, Emanuel—do you accede to my proposition?"—"I shall be sincere, father," replied the ingenuous Marquis, "provided you promise to hear me with indulgence."—"My story," said Emanuel, "will not be long, and, what is worse, I fear it will prove wholly uninteresting: if, after this brief preface, which I have deemed it necessary to make, you should still wish to hear a dull narrative, I am ready to yield obedience."

"You must spare me a most painful effort," exclaimed the Count; "an effort, compared to which, the most dreadful calamity would appear to me a favour of the Almighty. My misfortunes are hideous even in retrospect; and, I believe, they are past remedy. Death alone,—but that shuns me. My friend," he added, seizing the hand of Fernando, "my only friend,

tell me whether you do not repent having devoted your time to the care of a wretch who can give you nothing in return,—no—not even his confidence--the secrets of his past life. Tell me whether you repent of this; if so, I will give you back your liberty, your protestations your, heart; sorrow shall even here consign me to the grave, whilst you return to the society of your fellow-creatures, and seek another and a more worthy companion." "I have sworn to love you," replied Fernando; "to consecrate my life to your service; yet hitherto I have neither inquired respecting your past life nor your future designs. I have bound myself to your fate, whether you be criminal or innocent, culpable or virtuous. I have united my destiny to your's, without having the means to solve so important a problem. I do not ask

any confidence of you now. If your misfortunes be unjust, or if they be merited, bear them like a man; but be convinced of this, that whatever be the nature of those avowals which truth may wring from your bosom, they shall never sway the mind of your friend."

"Never, never can I make any avowal!" exclaimed Osma: "once more take back your affection; I see it is considered as the price of my confidence."—"I did not expect the latter," returned Fernando, "when I bestowed the former. My affection, like my opinion, is unchangeable."—Poor Fernando, you thought as you spoke, and paid a tribute to the human heart which it did not merit.

The Marquis of Talavera, as the sequel will demonstrate, was no exception to the general rule.—After this

affecting explanation had taken place, which promised Jerome no sort of elucidation with respect to the object of his conjectures, it was settled that the four friends should meet again on the following day at the parsonage, and that the venerable pastor should commence his history. Fernando was to follow him. These narratives seemed to promise some variety in the conversations of the little party; and they separated under the pleasing expectations of being agreeably entertained for the space of several days.

As Jerome accompanied his visitants part of their way home, he took an opportunity of saying to Don Fernando in an under tone, "Promise me that in the course of your solitary rambles, should you think fit to indulge in any, you will not go beyond the white cross, which you may chance to

meet with."—"That on the side of Grenada?"--said Fernando.—"Yes." "And, why not?"—"I have reaso ns for prescribing this rule, and I think I know enough of my pupil's heart to be convinced that he will not disobey me in one instance at least."—"What mystery does that part of the mountain contain?"—"I know not; it is possible that my conjectures are erroneous; and time alone can solve the enigma. Hitherto it has been my endeavour to prevent faults and indiscretions from breaking the delicate thread which serves to guide me through an intricate labyrinth."

"Is the female ,whom I beheld this morning, involved in this mystery?"—"It may be she is; but as yet I know not."—"Tell me, shall I see her again?" "I cannot say; she was to have quitted the mountain this morning."—

"Gracious Heaven!—Never to return?"—"I believe so; unless her health be re-established. The keen air of this district produced a disorder in her chest."—"Good God! that so young and so beautiful"—"Almedorina is not beautiful."--"I only surmised as much; but she is pretty at least."—"No;—external charms have been withheld from her by the Sovereign Dispensator of all blessings."—"She doubtless possesses mental talents?"—"Not one; she is neither calculated to please, nor qualified to captivate; esteem is the utmost she can aspire to."—"How frigid a sentiment!"—"If I mistake not her character, this very esteem which you repel so disdainfully is the only object of Almedorina's ambition."—"Believe me, father, the young lady understands another language."—"Woe to

him who would endeavour to familiarize her ear with the language of love. I repeat to you, Fernando, that Almedorina is not favoured by nature, at least in the sense in which the profane and senseless part of mankind interpret the expression. She is neither beautiful, nor pretty; she can neither dance gracefully, sing tastefully, nor even speak in a pleasing tone. Mild, simple, modest, and laborious, she has hitherto only known the toilsome occupations imposed upon her by misfortune. She is not aware that it is necessary to please in order to seduce, and that mental and personal accomplishments are necessary to the art of pleasing. Her mind is untainted, her heart pure, her judgment tolerably correct, her memory unadorned, and her person ordinary.—Such, in a few words, is the portrait of Almedorina.

Was it thus that your ardent imagination depicted her?"—"Quite the reverse."—"I thought so. Your palette, enriched with brilliant colours, produced a monster of perfection in your attempt to describe an unknown being; but, as it happens, truth did not guide your pencil. I have retouched, and, I hope, amended the work of imagination."—"Yes, to my utter discomfiture; I was infinitely better pleased with the illusion."—"It was indeed but an illusion."—"Yet it pleased my fancy."—"Child of caprice! another whim will generate similar sensations, upon which you will surfeit your imagination, till you fall again."—"Then you conceive, father, that my taste is precarious?"—"Rather so, my son."—As Jerome returned this laconic reply, he found himself on the confines of his district,

upon which he took leave of his friends, reminding them of their engagement for the following day, which they promised faithfully to keep. The pastor then returned to his parsonage, Emanuel to Grenada, and Fernando and his friend to the residence of Hernando.

CHAP. XI.

On the following day, according to their promise, the four friends met at the hermitage of the venerable Jerome, who received them with that affection and good-nature which characterized his general behaviour. After a frugal breakfast, offered without unmeaning ceremony, and accepted with unaffected gratitude, the pastor proposed to adjourn to his little gar-

den, where, seated with his companions in an arbour formed of odoriferous shrubs and flowers, he addressed them in the following terms: "You are desirous, my friends, of being made acquainted with the particulars of my chequered life, and I am willing to satisfy your curiosity.

"My story contains few events; a single passion has been the spring of all my actions, and that passion is love. I had the misfortune to form an imprudent connection, but I had not the fortitude to abandon it. I quitted the world, where I had lost every hope of being happy. Such, in a few words, is the abridgement of my life. If, Fernando, I imagined that the recital of my sufferings might one day have the effect of preserving you from the same faults and misfortunes, O, my son, with what eagerness

would I commence my history; but, alas! I cannot flatter myself with so fond an expectation."

The old veteran pilot, on his return from a perilous voyage, recounts in vain to young enthusiasts, what quicksands he has encountered, what tempests he has experienced;—nothing can estrange the ardent wishes of his infatuated hearers from rash pursuits, and the realization of projects teeming with danger. "But let me proceed in my narrative; and lay open to your view, a heart long torn by misfortune."

THE STORY

OF

DON JUAN DE MANDINI.

"I WAS born at Madrid; my family, which was one of the most ancient and illustrious in Spain, was highly favoured with the gifts of fortune; and at my entrance into life, every thing seemed calculated to insure my future felicity. Alas! I should doubtless have grasped this fugitive shadow, which flees the important supplications of mankind in general, had not

the clouds of passion obscured that bright sun of happiness whose rays gilded my birth.

"Don Henriquez, my father, attended solely to my education. He was my preceptor, my guide, and my friend. Embracing the arts, and other branches of study, the lessons which he gave me tended alike to initiate me into an acquaintance with serious pursuits and pleasing accomplishments. To the latter I gave the preference. Painting and poetry more especially engrossed my attention; and my father, who cultivated both arts with extraordinary success, was so far from condemning my enthusiasm, that he even augmented it by his example, and by extolling the tardy progress I made; and thus having no taste, no idea, for any thing beside the arts which exalt the imagination, my mind was abso-

lutely open to every attack of the passions. I was the eldest of my family. Sancho, my younger brother, and Clemenza, my sister, were destined by my father for a religious life; whilst I was designed to maintain the name and rank of our ancestors at court.

"Fate had, however, decreed it otherwise. The overbearing Sancho refused obedience to the will of his father; and having secretly fled to a neighbouring port, embarked for Vera-Cruz, informing his family that he intended seeking in another hemisphere a state of independence conformable to his taste.

"Clemenza, whose disposition was of a more happy turn, calmly submitted to enter upon the walk of life which her parent had chosen for her; her lively and well grounded piety made her consider the cloister as a port of safety against the storms of life; and

never did she experience the slightest regret at having made that sacrifice, which she consummated at the age of eighteen. I was a witness to her holy submission, and bitterly deplored it. Fool that I was! in exchange for the perishable wealth which she left to me, Clemenza received the only really precious, the only essentially useful, gifts,—innocence and peace. I was destined one day to betake myself to the cloister, as she had done; but, alas! with what opposite sentiments! Passion alone had driven me out of society, but virtue it was that led her into retirement; I was doomed to taste nothing but bitterness, disgust, and remorse in solitude; she, on the contrary, experienced all those sweet and peaceful ensations that constitute the train of innocence.

" Left alone with a naturally indulg-

ent and fond parent, I found little difficulty in engrossing his whole affection; I flattered his vanity: he commended even my very caprices, and laid the foundation of my unhappiness.

"Fernando, Fernando, how frequently have I heard you, at the Escurial, arraign the austere severity of the authors of your being, and express your dissatisfaction at being necessitated to bear the paternal yoke. It is not my practice to endeavour to extenuate unjust rigour; every excess in morality is a calamity with respect to him who bears the burden; but, believe me, my young friend, that if rigour is dangerous in the system of education, misplaced indulgence is not less so; the time at length arrives when the too gentle preceptor finds himself obliged to refuse his pupil the object of his

wild desires; and then what a dreadful contest ensues between authority scarcely respected, and fiery youth hardly restrained within the bounds of decorum. Such, my friends, was the critical situation in which my passions and the condescension of my parent placed me just as I had attained my twentieth year. But I will not anticipate events: your friendship requires that I should enter upon tedious details, and these I will undertake even at the risk of appearing tiresome. My desire to render my faults useful to you, Fernando, encourages me to continue those painful avowals. One day or other, my young friend, you will become a father, and of course you will not neglect your offspring;—nature, education, and reflection qualify you for the office of their preceptor; and I trust that the example of your

own father and of mine, will furnish you with some useful lessons in this respect. But to return to my narrative.

"I finished the studies marked out for me under the auspices of Count Mandini, and at the age of eighteen, my father and preceptor pronounced me an accomplished pupil, because, as he said, I was perfect master of three living languages, a great musician, a good painter, and an energetic poet.

"The study of religion, of morality, and of some philosophy, had been wholly neglected among the multiplicity of my less important occupations; but my father persuaded himself that, after making the tour of Europe with him in the quality of connoisseur and amateur, I should, on my return to my native land, find leisure sufficient to acquire the solid instruction in which

I was so deplorably deficient. Don Henriquez accused his compatriots of sacrificing the graces of the mind, and the charms of the fine arts, to the minute practice of certain austere and shackling duties.

"Whilst he lopped off from the fair tree of education the leafy branches of religion, which, he asserted, only tended to exclude the rays of the sun of science, his destructive hatchet left me exposed on every side to the scorching flames of impetuous passion. It is with regret that I am now obliged to attribute my misfortunes to the imprudence of a father; but, alas! had he taught me more justly to respect the authority of Heaven, I should not have disputed that which it bestowed upon him. Restrained by a sacred tie, I should have recognised a power superior to desire,—the power of virtue.

Don Henriquez was so far from foreseeing what poisonous fruits he should reap from his system of education, that he highly applauded his own imagined discernment.

"The world, which judges only by appearances, and which is only subjugated by show and mere outside; this false and fickle world, of whose suffrages I was then absolutely greedy, reechoed my name, and vaunted my talents; while the women in particular seemed to contend for the possession of my heart.

"Youthful, of illustrious rank, favoured by the gifts of fortune, and possessing the grand art of displaying my acquirements to the best advantage, I soon obtained a splendid reputation. The pride of my father secretly triumphed. The prime minister, who had long been the enemy of our house,

seemed to abjure his ancient hatred in compliment to me. I was received under his roof as if I were his best beloved child, and the public voice had already named me the husband of the lovely Seraphina de Mandax, his only daughter. The King was soon informed of the flattering distinction with which the young lady received me. He was highly delighted at being thus afforded an opportunity of re-uniting two powerful houses, who had been mutual rivals and enemies for upwards of a century; and having ordered my father to court, he in the most gracious manner proposed to him to bury the jarring discontents and pretensions of the Counts of Mandax and Mandini in a happy matrimonial alliance.

"The request of a monarch is essentially a mandate. Had Don Henri-

quez been permitted to make his own choice of my partner for life, he would in all likelihood have fixed upon any other than Seraphina; but now a monarch deigned to advise when he might have commanded, and the result was inevitable. My father promised respect, submission, and gratitude, in my name; and on the same evening I was presented to the circle of the court, and in the palace of the Count de Mandax, as the future husband of the lovely Seraphina.—I now commenced my offerings of verses, splendid fêtes, and the usual homages, at the shrine of my terrestrial divinity, whom I denominated the mistress of my thoughts. I assumed her favourite colour, and exhibited her device. Seraphina danced only with me; if she sang, my guitar accompanied her trembling tones; and, in a word, it

was the general opinion that ere the return of the spring I should become the son-in-law of Count de Mandax. My father was unusually anxious for the event taking place; the Count de Mandax did not appear less earnest upon the occasion: the King himself frequently deigned to mention the intended union with pleasure; and I, who had been at first terrified at the very idea of a solemn engagement, found myself drawn, as it were, towards the lovely Seraphina, by the influence of beauty coupled with virtue.

"Such was our situation, when an unexpected event suddenly altered the face of affairs, and plunged me into an abyss of misery.

"The Countess de Mandax idolized her daughter, whom she had educated in the most minute and austere practices of a rigid cloister, in the very

heart of the court. Donna Mandax herself conformed to the discipline of a convent, which she conceived to be absolutely essential to ensure felicity in this and the next world.

"It frequently happened, that with all the imprudent vivacity of my age, I took the liberty to rally Seraphina on certain of her religious observances, which I designated useless and ridiculous. The Countess mildly rebutted my insulting irony, and with tears in her eyes conjured me to respect the sacred principles of the virtuous companion whom she was about to bestow upon me. This indulgence was so far from inspiring me with gratitude, that it only tended to make me use still greater liberties than I had hitherto done.

"The tender and gentle Seraphina, who really loved me, not unfrequently

lamented in concert with her mother what she justly termed my fatal blindness. Alas! the culpable propensity to cast ridicule upon duties which we have not the courage to fulfil, was destined to cost me my peace of mind, and poor Seraphina her earthly repose. Without entertaining for this angelic creature that violent and impetuous species of passion which I was soon destined to feel, I experienced a sentiment pure as her spotless mind, and gentle as her demeanour. The idea of possessing her did not agitate my bosom with any thing like delirium; I only promised myself a felicitous union, similar to that of our first parents in the days of their innocence. Seraphina, on her side, confiding in her love for me, was not alarmed at reflecting that a void must result from the union of our hearts, owing to the absence of a mu-

tual sense of religious duty ; she trusted that felicity would bring me back to the path of virtue, and that the duties of a husband and a father would render me mindful of those of a Christian.

" Donna Mandax had gradually led her daughter to the performance of her duties through the medium of mildness and tenderness, and the gentle Seraphina concluded that nothing could withstand the power of divine gratitude. ' I will make him so happy,' said she, ' that he will be compelled to bless the author of my being.'—Interesting and innocent Seraphina, in return for so noble, so generous a design, I basely gave up your celestial mind a prey to protracted sorrow ! Alas ! after a painful vicissitude of days of bitterness, at the termination of my melancholy pil-

grimage, the recollection of the agonies I have caused you to endure, tugs at my heart-strings, and poisons the last hours of my life !"

CHAP. XII.

" Not satisfied with wounding the Countess de Mandax on the score of principles so dear to the heart, I carried my indiscretion so far as to write a satire on the regular conduct of several ladies of the court; nor did I even spare the mother of Seraphina. I unluckily dropped the manuscript of this fatal production, which contained the strongest proof of my criminality,

in the presence of his Majesty, and I had the pain to see it fall into the hands of the Count de Mandax himself. From this moment I concluded that my ruin was certain; I knew Don Lopes to be proud, implacable, irritable, and difficult to be conciliated. He had the sure means in his hands to destroy the son of an ancient enemy. Could I flatter myself with the hope that he would let the opportunity escape, and only hearken to the voice of clemency? What I suffered on this occasion can scarcely be conceived, much less expressed. In the height of my agitation, I vainly endeavoured to approach Don Lopes, in order to attempt an imposition upon him, and recover the fatal scroll, which, I well knew, if he read it, would work my destruction. My attempts were, alas! quite fruitless; for the Count

de Mandax kept completely out of my reach during the evening. Donna Beatrix, not knowing how to divine the cause of my agitation, which she could not help noticing, used every means to dissipate it, and kept me the whole evening near her couch, eulogizing her daughter, descanting upon my approaching happiness, citing a thousand charming traits of Seraphina's infant character, and neglecting no opportunity to excite in my heart a lively gratitude towards the sovereign Dispensor of all blessings, who had prepared for me so exhaustless a source of pure delights and remorseless pleasures. Agitated by the emotions which wrung my heart, I could scarcely find patience to listen to the Countess, while the enchanting picture which she traced still more augmented my confusion and despair.

"At length the tedious evening was passed, and the long chain of my misfortunes commenced. On my return to the palace of Mandini, I vainly tried to recover that tranquillity which had fled from my heart; but even the prism of self-love was incapable of dazzling the eyes of my understanding, or dwindling the situation, in which my imprudence had plunged me, into an illusion. To deny my fault was impossible; to extenuate it seemed almost as difficult; and, on the whole, I concluded that I must undergo a signal punishment at the hands of an irritated husband. I was in this cruel state of anxiety, when Cavallo, the equerry of the Count de Mandox, entered my apartment.

"This man, whose probity was undoubted, and his attachment to his master extreme, was highly esteemed

by Donna Beatrix, and possessed the confidence of her spouse. His presence seemed a confirmation of my worst suspicions: I was unable to utter a word; and, on perceiving that he was about to speak, I trembled violently from head to foot. I know not whether Cavallo noticed my terror, but certain it is that he lost no time in communicating to me, that his master was anxious to see me at the royal palace, where he would converse with me on a most important subject, prior to the King's levee.

"The place appointed for our interview was not calculated to allay my fears. Don Lopes did not await my coming at his own residence; and hence I concluded, that he had for ever banished me from his palace; from that asylum of piety and virtue, in whose bosom there was no longer

a situation for the guilty author of an unmerited and impious satire.

"Sunk to the lowest ebb by this appalling reflection, I sorrowfully followed the footsteps of Cavallo, as far as the entrance of the Buen-Retiro. Here I stood alone at the base of the statue of Charles V. and resting my distracted head in my hands, insensible to all around me, indulged in sad reflections upon the conversation I was about to be engaged in.

"After waiting for some time in painful anxiety, the Count de Mandax appeared. His demeanour was solemn, his manners perfectly unembarrassed, nor did his features betray either anger or indignation. All the impassibility of the judge, and all the dignity of the father, shone from his countenance, and marked his proceeding. He accosted me as quietly as if

he had it not in his power to decide upon my fate, and conducting me to the most unfrequented part of the gardens, seated himself behind the monument of the feeble and unfortunate Philip IV. Trembling, and in the utmost consternation, I stood before him like a criminal, who awaits the just sentence of the law.

"My confusion did not escape his penetrating eye, and for some moments he left me to the endurance of the first species of punishment that the guilty suffer: at length he broke silence, and addressed me nearly in the following words: 'Young man, the state of humiliation into which a single glance of mine seems capable of involving you, convinces me that your mind is not inaccessible to honourable sentiments, nor quite callous to those of remorse. I wished for an avowal of your fault,

and had I not obtained it, I should have cast you off for ever. But this avowal is inscribed upon your visage, which can still blush at the aspect of virtue;—I do not therefore despair with regard to your future conduct.'—'Oh! my worthy benefactor!' I exclaimed, falling at his feet, 'can it be possible? Will not my culpability deprive me of your friendship; will it not rob me of the fond hope of becoming the husband of my beloved Seraphina?'—'Rise, Don Juan,' replied the Count, calmly, 'and candidly answer the man, who, though he is your judge, cannot forget that he might have been your father. Has the abominable production, which last night fell into my hands, been seen by any of the young courtiers, with whom you associate?'—'I most solemnly protest it has not.'—'Does

Count Mandini know of it ?'—' Neither he nor any other individual, excepting you and myself, is acquainted with the commission of a crime, which I now would fain redeem at the price of my blood.'—' What use did you intend making of it ?'—' To keep it by me till Donna Seraphina should be mine ; and then to shew it to her, without naming myself as the author, in order to ridicule her out of the observance of those duties which serve as a constant reproach to my laxity of conduct.' — ' Senseless young man ! and so you would endeavour to destroy the surest pledge of your honour and happiness !'—' You have required the whole truth from me ; and though my avowal should produce my utter destruction, your indulgence would disenable me from concealing a particle of the fact.'

" After a moment's pause, the Count de Mandax seemed to regard me with less severity, made me sit down beside him, and taking one of my hands, said to me, in a broken voice: 'Young man, your culpable ingratitude has wounded me to the very soul. I loved you, Don Juan; and, seduced by your amiable talents and your external advantages, I abjured, on your account alone, my rooted dislike to your family. Faithful to this first movement of my heart, I chose you as the depositary of my daughter's happiness; to your fostering protection I meant to have consigned the dawning virtues of Seraphina; and, in return for all this, you wantonly outrage the feelings of her mother. Can you blame me if I decline proceeding farther in this affair? Were I to appoint you the lord and master of a youthful, virtuous, and re-

ligious virgin, would it not be placing her in such a situation that she must choose between the shocking alternative of incessantly despising her husband, or that of renouncing her sacred principles, and participating in your apostacy? I condemn her to misery, either here or hereafter;—such is the horrid gift, which, as a father, I shudder at bestowing upon my daughter.'

'Banish your fears,' exclaimed I, once more falling at the Count's feet, 'I most solemnly declare that I will ever pay the tribute of respect even to the foibles of Seraphina, if any foibles she has. I will do more; for the sake of her, I will endeavour to attend to those duties which my haughty reason has hitherto spurned at.'—'Don Juan,' returned the Count, as he raised me up, 'it is not my wish that

love should transform you into a hypocrite. The Almighty rejects compulsory or sacrilegious incense; the homage of the heart, the submission of the mind, are the most pleasing offerings that you can lay upon this sacred altar.

'Led astray by a dangerous system of independence, the Count de Mandini, your father, began by doubting, and has finished by utterly renouncing the sacred and saving code of our religious laws. The weak man has done more; he has propagated his detestable doctrine, and robbed you of the most precious treasure that mortals possess—an implicit belief in the existence of a protective, remunerative, and avenging Deity. I have too long been aware that the hideous monster, Atheism, abided in the bosom of Don Henriquez; but I believed that for his

own security he had hitherto kept you in the dark on this subject, and refrained from breaking down the only barrier capable of opposing the fiery passions of ardent youth. The dreadful scroll, now in my possession, has cruelly undeceived me; and were the King made acquainted with its contents, it would operate the destruction of both father and son.

'You, perhaps, feared that I should turn it to such a dreadful purpose; but if so, your fears are groundless. As the husband of Beatrix, I ought to punish you; as a Christian, it is my duty to pardon you; but, as a prudent father, I can never again think of bestowing upon you the hand of Seraphina. I am now going to acquaint the King that I have chosen another partner for my daughter; and I must request, Don Juan, that you will here

receive my final adieu. The Count de Mandini shall learn from his august master the change that has taken place in your destiny, but the true cause of that change he shall never become acquainted with, unless you yourself make the discovery.'

"As he uttered these words, Don Lopes would have withdrawn; but, urged by despair, and worked up to the highest pitch of frenzied woe, I opposed his departure, and, with tears in my eyes, conjured him to believe me truly penitent, and, to credit the solemn promise I had given him, not only to respect the religious principles of Seraphina, but earnestly to aim at instructing myself in his Christian duties, and endeavouring to fulfil them. At the same time I attempted to palliate my faults, by pleading the tenderness of my age, the state of ignorance in which

I had been brought up, and the prevalence of pernicious example.

" Don Lopes heard me with patience, and even seemed touched by my anguish. ' Foolish youth,' said he, ' why did you teach me to fear you, at the moment when I loved you with the tenderness of a parent? A dread of the vengeance of the Inquisition has hitherto induced you to play the hypocrite; have I not cause to fear then, that interest, combined with love, may render you a traitor, and that your heart may disavow the sacred oath which your lips pronounce?'—' Never, never!'—' Hear me, Don Juan. I really love you; and it costs me, perhaps, more than you imagine, in being forced to relinquish my project for your future felicity.

' When you first appeared at court, I had just lost a beloved son; the last

support of my name, and the prop of my declining age. At a moment so afflictive to my heart, Heaven seemed to bring you forward, and present you to me as one deserving of filling the vacant place of my deceased child. Your features, your age, your talents, recalled the image of my Alonzo to my mind; and I resolved that you should occupy the void his decease had caused in my affections,—that you should become the husband of Seraphina. Alas! how little did I then foresee, that the hand which I had chosen to dry up my tears, would be the very first to tear open the wounds of my heart!'

"Here the Count paused, as if overcome by the excess of his feelings, and hid his face in his hands, in order to conceal a few tears which stole down his cheek. The sight of his grief punished me more severely

than the bitterest reproaches possibly could have done. I cast myself at his feet, implored forgiveness, and testified such unfeigned repentance, that he at length trusted to my sincerity, and pressing me to his bosom, exclaimed: 'Ungrateful youth, I pardon you the injury you have done to me; but do not think that your crime shall escape with perfect impunity.

'We must now separate; I am too much agitated to pronounce your fate at present; but to-morrow you shall learn my determination, and your sentence. In order to bear your lot without murmuring, remember that it will more deeply wound my feelings than your own; for the father, who is compelled to punish, ever suffers more than the child on whom chastisement is bestowed.'

"As he pronounced this truth in a

tender, yet solemn tone, Count de Mandax left me, not, however, without giving me a parting look. There was so much of goodness, indulgence, and tenderness in the look, that it alone was sufficient to dissipate my fears, if I had still entertained any; but how was it possible I could harbour a single doubt? The father of Seraphina had named me his son; he had pressed me to his heart, and his arms were still open to receive the ingrate.

"With what different sensations, then, did I quit the Buen-Retiro, to those with which I had entered it. As culpable certainly I was, but infinitely more confident; and now did I once again venture to think of happiness. But here, to my shame be it acknowledged, that in proportion as my fears vanished, my remorse decreased; and, at the close of the day, the fault which

might have cost me my life, seemed to me no more than a mere frolic, equally natural and pardonable in a person of my years, and only the effect of self-love, which encompasses youth, and conceals from it the abyss into which the passions are hurrying it. A long term of repentance would have preserved me from fresh lapses; but I soon became forgetful that I had rendered myself undeserving of happiness, and thus forfeited the prospect of felicity beyond recovery."

CHAP. XIII.

"I PASSED the remainder of this day, so interesting to my feelings, in absolute retirement; less, it is true, from motives of prudence, than for the purpose of reflecting at leisure on new schemes of happiness. I doubted not that, as the heart of Don Lopes had already sealed my pardon, my punishment would be confined to a short absence from the presence of Sera-

phina; and I already viewed in imagination, at no very distant period, my union with that lovely girl. I certainly was not an enthusiastic lover of Seraphina; I admired her only for her virtues, auguring permanent felicity from the daily proofs she gave of the sweetness and gentleness of her disposition. What rendered my union with her peculiarly desirable, was that the daughter of Don Lopes would not only bring me an immense fortune, but issue to me and my family the favour of the reigning monarch, and the right of pretending to the first dignities of the state. Intoxicated by so brilliant a prospect, my father incessantly recapitulated to me all the advantages likely to result from the connection, blessed the happy lot for which he was indebted to me, and left me not a moment to reflect upon the

solemn contract I was about to enter into.

"Fortune and its favours, ambition and its joys, pleasures and their illusions, the court and its honours, the world and its applause, were the seducing images which an imprudent parent incessantly presented to my youthful imagination, uncontrouled by rule, and unrestrained by any moral tie; nor did he once think of offering to my mind a flattering picture of the conjugal duties I was called upon to perform. My only guide persuaded me that I merited still higher advancement than that which awaited me; and thus, even at my entrance into life, applauded by every body, flattered by both sexes, and governed only by my passions, the very excess of my felicity proved the instrument of my destruction; a sad yet salutary example to youth

of the absolute need in which he stands of a sage guide, and of the necessity of yielding implicit obedience to the counsels of wisdom. But to resume my narrative.

"Three days elapsed subsequent to my conversation with Count de Mandax, without my receiving any tidings from him; and I had already begun to grow weary of the species of retreat to which I had condemned myself. My father, who was wholly unacquainted with the motive of my seclusion, importuned me to accompany him to court; and I was on the point of yielding to his instances, when I received a message from Don Lopes, appointing a time and place when and where I might commune with him in private. I accordingly repaired to his palace, and was received by him with a noble and majestic condescension

which, for a moment, brought to my mind the recollection of my fault, and of the sentence I was about to receive.

'Don Juan,' said the minister, addressing me, 'your prudent and discreet conduct since our late conversation, has proved to me, that you are conscious of the trespass you have committed, and of the necessity of repairing it. I am about to suggest to you the means of effecting the latter. I have deeply reflected upon the importance of the obligations I shall impose upon you, by giving you the hand of my daughter. You are too young to be aware of their extent, and too ill instructed in the duties of the father of a family to be capable of fulfilling them; I conceive, therefore, that it will be essential to your happiness, as well as that of Seraphina, to afford you due time to become acquainted with

them. If you are willing to conform to the regulations I mean to propose, I once more promise you the hand of the heiress of the family of Mandax; if not,—our negotiation drops here, and you are at liberty, from this day forward, to make your advances towards another alliance.'—'And what is the nature of those regulations?' I demanded with somewhat of warmth in my manner.—'That within eight days from the present time, you crave permission of Don Henriquez to travel; that you then quit Madrid, and journeying over the most celebrated countries of Europe, remain absent from Spain for the term of two years. During this period, it is my wish that I alone maintain a close correspondence with you; and it is my intention to assign you a worthy mentor, who,

from his attachment to me, heretofore undertook the guidance of my Alonzo.

'Thanks to the attention and care of the worthy Velasquez, my son returned to his native land, the glory and admiration of his friends; and had not death untimely snatched him away in the flower of his youth, he would have now presented the world with a rare and admirable combination of every virtue and every talent. The latter of these advantages, you, Don Juan, have inherited; but in the former, and the more important, you are utterly deficient. I trust, however, that Heaven has implanted the germ of virtue in your bosom, and that good example will suffice to produce its growth and expansion. It is from the cares and assiduity of Velasquez that I look for success in this respect; and should he obtain it, I shall, perhaps, feel greater pleasure on the occa-

sion than yourself. And now, Don Juan, you are acquainted with the nature of my regulations;—will you submit to them?'

'Then,' replied I, evidently piqued and dissatisfied, 'it would seem that, in order to please you, and obtain Donna Seraphina, I must put myself, for two whole years, under the tutelage of an ignorant, superstitious monk.'—'You form a very unjust estimate of Velasquez's character, sir. He is more of a religious from innate conviction, than from outward profession, and to exalted piety he superadds talents still more exalted. Learned without being pedantic, grave without constraint, and moral without indulging in severity, he permits youth to enjoy pleasures which maturer age need not blush at participating, nor does he ever view the territory of duty

unless it be through the telescope of real happiness. Is such a man, sir, calculated to excite sentiments of repugnance in your mind?'

"Don Lopes had acquired that ascendency over my passions, which the constant practice of virtue ever confers; and I faithfully promised to yield perfect obedience to the salutary rules he had laid down. The most difficult part of the business was to obtain the consent of Don Henriquez to my temporary exile, without making him acquainted with the cause.

"The Count de Mandax undertook the performance of this task. Alas! what means did he adopt for this purpose? O my friends, I alone felt the punishment which his wrath inflicted; whilst the world looked upon my journey as an honourable mission, confided to me by the sovereign, notwith-

standing my extreme youth and inexperience. The invidious murmured at my lot, the courtiers were astonished, my father elated, and poor Seraphina depressed by it. As for me, who merited the humiliation of notorious punishment, I received my chastisement decorated with all the smiling appendages of an unprecedented favour.

"It was this species of ingenuous management on the part of the powerful minister, that contributed to my destruction; a severe lesson might possibly have corrected my evil propensities; but unmerited indulgence, and undeserved bounty, rendered me an ingrate.

"Confident of having insured the success of his plans, Don Lopes contrived that Don Velasquez should be nominated the companion of my journey. We departed from Madrid with

a numerous suite, and surrounded by all the tinsel splendour of pomp and grandeur.

"In the eyes of the multitude I appeared to enjoy a triumph; but alas! I only proceeded to my ruin.

"Previously to my quitting my native land, I obtained permission to bid Seraphina farewell. She appeared thunderstruck at the suddeness of my departure; but alas! she was far from divining its origin, or foreseeing its issue. Prostrate at her feet, I vowed eternal fidelity to her, promised to accelerate the period of my return by every possible means, and left her fully persuaded, that I as bitterly lamented the delay of our union as she herself did.

"The very evening, on which I parted from my betrothed bride, witnessed the departure of Velasquez and

myself for Italy. We travelled slowly, yet not unprofitably, as far as the arts and sciences were concerned.

"The worthy mentor, whom Don Lopes had chosen, fully justified the opinion with which that upright man had endeavoured to inspire me. Religious, modest, and erudite, he united in himself all the good qualities of the heart, and all the talents of the mind; but, unfortunately for me, those precious gifts were sometimes rendered nugatory, by a certain docility of disposition, and an unaffected candour, which left him open to every species of deception.

"The Count de Mandax had entrusted to his care a docile, virtuous, and tractable pupil, and hence he had no opportunity of noticing those capital defects in the character of Velasquez. Accustomed from his infancy

to respect his preceptors and to love his duties, Alonzo did not in a single instance attempt to impose upon the credulity of his friend, or to evade the lax vigilance of his guide. Possibly I too might have evinced equal submission, were it not that a fatal passion seized the reins of my weak imagination.

"O Fernando, what a lesson for inexperience does the fatal catastrophe I am about to relate, afford! The bare recollection of it, after so long a term of repentance, after being so long the prey of remorse, the bare remembrance of it curdles my blood. Almighty God! how severe are the judgments thou dealest out to the reprobate,—yet how just!"

Here the unhappy Jerome paused, as if overcome by the recollection of his misfortunes, and borne down by

the weight of remorse. Affected by the painfulness of his situation, his friends refrained from urging the continuation of a narrative, which seemed to tear open the wounds of his mind; but at length, after a solemn silence, which no person present had ventured to interrupt, the pastor of the mountain resumed his sad story in the following terms.

CHAP. XIV.

"We arrived at Venice, the point of our destination, without experiencing any extraordinary adventure. I had hitherto had no opportunity to misconduct myself; and my worthy tutor, attributing my behaviour to the effect of penitence, transmitted the most satisfactory accounts of me to Count de Mandax. I hearkened with docility to his lessons of morality; and his pre-

cepts and examples began to give me a relish for that religion, which my misguided parent had found it more easy to calumniate than to inculcate.

"While my pious guide endeavoured to render me really virtuous, he did not require that I should abandon those arts and talents I had hitherto cultivated; on the contrary, he encouraged my taste, which, if ably directed, he well knew, would preserve me from the dangers that hover around the ardent and unemployed mind. The hours which my numerous avocations permitted me to call my own, were occupied in viewing those celebrated masterpieces of the Venetian school, which the works of Titian alone would have sufficed to immortalize. With what rapture did I contemplate the vigour of Paulo Veronese, the freedom of Georgio, and the grace of Tinto-

retto; in short all those *chefs d'oeuvre*, which astonish the vulgar, and charm the connoisseur.

"I had passed three months at Venice, during which period nothing had occurred to attract my attention from serious studies, when one evening, as I was coasting along the shores of the Adriatic, the sound of vocal music in a gondola, which passed close by us, struck upon my ear. The voice was that of a female, who, with expression that words are inadequate to describe, sweetly warbled one of those admirable lamentations of Jeremiah, where the prophet depicts the misfortunes of his country and his own misery. The Hebrew canticle thrilling over the smooth wave, and re-echoed by the neighbouring rocks, and the bark gliding gently along, as it melodiously conveyed that fine sensation of

pity, which the melancholy plaints of the prophet are so well calculated to produce,—combined to seduce me, as it were, into the most celestial of reveries. The poison of love rapidly coursed through my veins, and it seemed to me as if a deadly arrow had perforated my heart. So pure and angelical a voice, I figured to myself, could only belong to a celestial beauty: I burned with the desire of beholding her, of becoming acquainted with her; yet reason told me that if the voice of the lady had the power to overturn my weak resolution, the consequence of seeing her might be fatal in the extreme.--Many minutes had not elapsed since the fair unknown had ceased to sing, ere a scream of distress arrested my attention. The blood was actually frozen in my veins, and I started up incontinently. At this moment the

moon became visible, when, by her dubious light, I beheld, (oh dreadful sight!) a female form precipitated from the gondola, and vainly endeavouring to struggle with the waves. Without an instant's hesitation I plunged into the sea, seized the lovely but inanimate person, and boldly repelled the swelling tide, that seemed eager to rob me of my prize. After contending with the waves for nearly a quarter of an hour, I happily reached the shore, and had the inexpressible delight to know, that I had rescued the most charming of women from the jaws of the devouring element.

"Arrived on land, every person present seemed eager to render the lovely stranger assistance; but I rudely rejected their offers of service, determined to restore her to life by my own efforts alone, to enjoy without

participation the expression of her gratitude, and to see her lovely eyes fixed upon me only. Whilst I thus yielded to the delirium of a dawning passion, I perceived the surrounding crowd making way in order to the admission of an old, ugly, withered little woman, who exclaimed in a shrill and trembling tone: 'Sarah, O my God, my dear Sarah, how did this accident happen?

'My sweet sir, what obligations do I not owe you for having saved the life of this dear child!' I turned round at this address, and beheld one of the most hideous figures I had ever before seen. Ill-nature was depicted in her every feature, while that noblest of sentiments, gratitude, appeared as remote from her countenance as heaven is from earth. I averted my regards from so disgusting an object, and

turned them on the beautiful Sarah, who had by this time recovered her senses, though a deadly paleness pervaded her visage. More tremulous and agitated than herself, I tendered her my arm, to support her to her gondola; but ere she accepted my offer, she cast a significant and uneasy look towards the old woman. The latter, with some eagerness, observed to me, that her niece was sufficiently recovered from her fright to need no farther support. 'Moreover;' she added, with a Sardonic grin, "I am not so borne down by the weight of years as to be disqualified from helping my niece so far.'

" Having spoken thus, she dragged the lovely Sarah, without paying any regard to her feeble state, towards the gondola; but did not I believe that I perceived the poor sufferer cast a me-

lancholy regard at her deliverer, as she quitted him?

"O my friends! how expressive was the farewel look of Sarah,—so much so, that it completed the overthrow of my very reason. In a sort of tempered frenzy I stopped the old woman, and, learning to dissimulate as I learned to love, addressed her to the following effect, in a mild and conciliatory tone: 'You will not leave me, I hope, madam, without favouring me with the name and rank of the interesting lady, to whom I have had the felicity to restore a beloved niece; condescend, madam, to give me such desirable information, that to-morrow I may have the pleasure to wait upon you, in order to ascertain whether the alarm you have this evening experienced, has proved injurious to the health of one who must be dear indeed to such as have the honour of her acquaintance?'

"This compliment, however adulatory, did not appear so by any means to the withered lady; and a look of satisfaction on the part of Sarah, convinced me that I used the proper means to disarm the rigour of her aunt! 'Although, sir,' said the latter, 'my taste and circumstances induce me to lead a very retired life, yet the service which you have rendered me, obliges me to make an exception in your favour to the general rule of my house. If, therefore, sir, you will take the trouble to call to-morrow at the palace of the Count de Porto, the Signora Bianchi will have the satisfaction to receive you, more especially when she becomes acquainted with the name and rank of her niece's champion.'

"These words, pronounced in a tone

of majestic dignity, led me to imagine that I had saved the life of the Count de Porto's daughter; with the fame of whose beauty all Venice rang, and for whose charities benedictions were hourly uttered in the asylum of misfortune.

"What could equal my joy and satisfaction, at the consciousness of having preserved to Venice the subject of its noble pride, to the unfortunate and helpless the object of their unfeigned gratitude! Enchanted at the discovery, I was going to quit the Signora without replying to her question, when she in her turn stopped me, and once more demanded my name, and the rank of my family. Don Velasquez, who till this moment had remained a mute spectator of the scene, imagining that the curiosity of Signora Bianchi carried somewhat of degrading suspicion with it, now stepped forward, and though

perhaps one of the humblest votaries of the pride of ancestry in all Spain, found his blood warm on the instant that any reflection was cast upon the family of his friend, and addressing the old lady, said: 'I believe, Signora, that Don Juan de Mandini, envoy extraordinary from the court of Spain to the Republic of Venice, may flatter himself with the hope of being admitted into the palace de Porto. He would have presented himself there on his arrival in this country, were it not that the multiplicity of his occupations have, till this very day, precluded him from the enjoyment of pleasurable society. At present he is not at liberty, and to-morrow we shall have the honour to avail ourselves of your polite invitation. I shall gladly profit by the opportunity to renew my acquaintance with the Count de Porto; whom

I had the pleasure to know when first I visited Venice, and whose kind offices I have on more than one occasion experienced.'

"Velasquez now made his bow, and, taking my arm, conducted me towards our gondola; not, however, before I had stolen a parting glance at the charming Sarah.

"During my conversation with her aunt, the roses had once more re-animated her countenance, and pleasure beamed from her lovely eyes; but I could not help perceiving that the explanation of Velasquez, so far from giving her the satisfaction I supposed it would, caused her to turn pale, and to appear dispirited. A deep sigh even escaped her, and penetrated to my very soul. Alas! the agitation which it occasioned me, might surely have warned me of the dreadful abyss

into which a fatal attachment was about to plunge me. A sincere friend, and there was one at my side, might have effected my preservation; but I used deception towards him. I concealed from Velasquez the storm which raged within my bosom, and I sought solitude, in order to minister to the dangerous sentiment which rapidly undermined my honour and my repose."

CHAP. XV.

"On my return home, I quitted Velasquez under some plausible pretext, and shut myself up in my own apartment, there to reflect at leisure on the waywardness of my fate. I found it impossible to dissemble my feelings to myself. I loved a charming girl, whom chance had thrown in my way, yet could feel nothing beyond respect for the virtuous maiden, whom my

father had chosen as my future companion through life. Ere I had seen Sarah, I imagined that the sentiment with which Seraphina had inspired me, was sufficient to constitute happiness; but a single regard of de Porto's lovely daughter disabused me of my error. Still I was well aware that I was irrevocably engaged to the daughter of Don Lopes; her family, mine, nay the whole city of Madrid, were acquainted with the projected union; and at the very moment when I had but just experienced the generous indulgence of Count de Mandax, I coolly meditated wounding him in the tenderest point. This idea terrified me, and in an interval, a lucid interval of reason, I vowed to sacrifice my passion at the shrine of honour and gratitude. The image of Sarah, however, speedily shook my resolve.

" Sarah was youthful, lovely, and of illustrious birth ; was she not capable then of satisfying the proud views of my father as well as Seraphina ?—No particular tie bound Don Henriquez to Spain ; what, therefore, should prevent him from abandoning his country, escaping the vengeance of a powerful enemy, and residing at Venice with a dutiful and grateful son, whose felicity he would thus render complete ?

" This enchanting dream of future bliss completed the overthrow of my late resolution ; and, as is the case in every warm head and enthusiastic heart, the illusions of fancy were the semblance of realization. I no longer doubted the success of my project.

" I passed the remainder of the night in the most violent agitation ; without stretching myself on a bed, I wrote upwards of twenty letters to my father,

and tore them as soon as they were written. I formed a thousand schemes, each more extravagant than the other; and, in short, this tedious night passed away in all the frenzy of absolute delirium. Exhausted by my mental efforts, sleep, or rather lassitude, bound up my senses, and, towards morning, I fell into a lethargic slumber, which lasted till mid-day. On awaking, I was told by Paolo, my equerry, that Don Velasquez had been to visit me several times in the course of the morning; but finding that I still slept, had gone out, and left a note for me. Paolo gave me this note, saying that Velasquez had told him three different times not to neglect delivering it the moment I should awake.

"I dismissed Paolo, and then proceeded to peruse the contents of the fatal scroll, which were as follows: 'I

am aware, Don Juan, that you have not closed your eyes during the night, and I am, therefore, unwilling to break in upon your rest at present. Whilst you endeavour to repair the ravages occasioned by too lively an imagination, it shall be my business to aim at an elucidation of those suspicions, which weigh heavily upon a naturally credulous mind. By relinquishing your intended visit to the palace de Porto, unless accompanied thither by me, you will second my intentions. Suffer yourself, to be led in this instance, by the experience of your aged friend.'

"The style of mystery in which these few lines were couched alarmed my very worst suspicions. What snares had I to dread, or what were those surmises to which Velasquez alluded? Did they not relate to the interesting

daughter of Count dePorto, whose life I had saved? what danger then had I to dread in the palace of him, whose child I had snatched from perdition?

"By dint of reflecting on the contents of this singular note, I concluded by believing that the crafty Velasquez, having read my passion in my eyes, designed, from motives of attachment to the family of Mandax, to deprive me of every hope of gaining the heart or hand of the beautiful Sarah. It was at this moment that I foresaw all the obstacles that stood in the way of my happiness; but,determined to overcome all of them by perseverance, Iresolved, in order to insure success, to call dissimulation and silence to my aid. I accordingly affected a show of gaiety very remote from my feelings; resumed my occupations; and appeared the same as I had ever done; so that,

when Don Velasquez returned home, he might imagine I had entirely effaced the impression made by the adventure of the past evening.

"Dinner was passed almost in silence notwithstanding my endeavours to bring about our accustomed conversations. Velasquez was unusually taciturn, whilst I sedulously observed him, determining to await his explanation of the cause of his very evident dissatisfaction; but for some hours my expectations were disappointed. He took his *siesta* as usual after dinner; but though I had not tasted repose during the night, I found myself unable to follow his example; and I therefore took up a volume which lay beside me. It was the 'Inferno' of Dante. I opened it at random. My senses alone wandered over those eloquent lines, so admirably calculated

to inspire the mind with sentiments of terror and pity. More than once had they harrowed up my soul; but now the majestic horror of the Italian poet made no impression upon a mind, occupied solely with the image of Sarah.

"As I mechanically turned over the leaves of the work, my eye chanced to alight upon the moving episode of the ill-fated Frances and her guilty seducer. I instantly recognised the passage. I had read it at least a hundred times; it had charmed my wild imagination; and I found a secret pleasure in the tears which the melancholy fate of those two victims of love drew from my eyes; but, to describe the effect it now had upon me, is more than I will attempt. In the punishment of Frances, I imagined I perused my own doom, traced in fiery characters; my future fate and that of Sarah

seemed to stand before me, as it were, in a magic circle, and a secret voice whispered to my heart, in the language of Dante; 'THUS PERISH ALL PERJURED WRETCHES!'

"Scared, I knew not why, I endeavoured to flee from myself, and in the solitude of a retired grove sought an asylum from the terrors of my imagination. Alas! where will he who contemplates the commission of a crime find an asylum from conscience? The scorching gale of the dog-star, the suffocating air of the atmosphere, the portentous clouds, obscuring the sun's rays, and the distant growling of the thunder, combined to augment my terror and agitation. It was at this dreadful crisis, that, for the first time, I felt the want of celestial succour; guilty as I had rendered myself in the sight of God, I ventured to invoke his aid. I

fell prostrate upon the burning soil, and my stifled groans solicited that mental calm which alone proceeds from the Almighty. Unavailing sorrow! the offspring only of the passion's tumult, how ill calculated wert thou to draw consolation from Heaven! Alas! a sincere repentance, a generous return to the path of virtue, were alone capable of disdaining the wrath of Heaven, and changing the destiny of a wretch like me!

"After remaining a considerable time a prey to grief of the deepest cast, I began to fear, lest my worthy mentor should discover me in a situation calculated to develope the state of my heart, and endeavouring to compose my demeanour; I returned to the apartment where I had left him. Velasquez had just awoke, and his inquiring eyes sought me on

every side. I did not seem to guess at the nature of his sensations, lest I should afford him an insight of my own; and with as careless an air as I could assume, invited him to join me in a game of billiards.

'I believe,' said he, with a smile, 'that you would not be quite pleased if I were to take you at your word. I ought, perhaps, to accept your proposition, and by making you play, punish you for your dissimulation towards a friend, and at the same time obtain a victory over you; for I well know that you would not be remarkably attentive to your game.'—'Why do you think so?'—'Because it does not require any very deep knowledge of the human heart to guess, that a young head, aware of being looked for at the palace de Porto, and of having received a mysterious

note from his mentor; it is not difficult, I say, to judge, that such a young head prefers an explanation of the said mysterious note, and a drive to the palace de Porto, to an insipid game of billiards with a prying old monitor.' — 'My dear Velasquez, what do you mean?' — 'Something which would astonish you less, if you were somewhat better versed in the knowledge of female vanity.. From an address given last night, in an equivocal manner, you doubtless supposed, that you had saved the life of the interesting daughter of the Count de Porto, and hence your brilliant imagination deduced a charmingly romantic inference.

'I am sorry, Don Juan, by a single word, to overturn the aërial edifice which you have taken such delight in erecting; but I cannot think of leav-

ing you any longer in error upon a subject, which, if not cleared up, might perhaps disturb your peace of mind for ever.

'The two persons whom we yesterday conversed with on the Brenta, certainly belong to the family of Count de Porto; but you do not, perhaps, guess in what capacities they are;—the one is housekeeper to the Countess de Porto; and the other—'

'Hold, Velasquez, it is impossible; you have been imposed upon; a low, an obscure situation cannot possibly accord with the most perfect being that Heaven has ever created!'—

'The interesting Sarah, as I am informed, is the companion of the Signora de Porto, who maintains her out of pure charity. I do believe, that her mind is superior to her situation; but still fate has placed an insurmountable

barrier between you and her. It would be ridiculous in you to attempt to remove it. The niece of Bianchi is poor; but she is virtuous. The breath of calumny has not hitherto tainted her reputation; and would you, by again beholding her, run the risk of creating a flame in her bosom, which may effect her ruin, and destroy your own felicity. Remember, Don Juan, that the only earthly possession of this poor girl is her innocence and her virtue; if, one day or other, you should rob her of those blessings, for the loss of which no treasure of this life can indemnify her, it were cruelty in you to have rescued her from the waves! The abyss from which you have snatched her, were less dangerous than that into which libertinism would plunge her!'

"Velasquez paused here to discover

what effect his apostrophe seemed to have upon me; but, fearful of betraying the various emotions which agitated my bosom, I was silent: at length, conceiving that I was somewhat master of myself, I ventured to inquire how he had obtained his information respecting Bianchi and her niece?—'There was no great need of penetration,' replied Velasquez, 'to discover the sphere in which they moved: a moment's sober reflection would have taught you to know, that two women pleasuring about in a hired gondola, having neither suite, nor company, and singing by moon-light, among a parcel of vulgar gondoliers, could hardly have belonged to the higher class of society. I was, moreover, well aware that Count de Porto, who had been some years a widower, confided the care of his only

daughter to an elderly aunt, and that all three of them were then absent from Venice. Hence I could not persuade myself that your lovely Sarah was the heiress of the house of de Porto, and that she had been left exposed to the accidents of a nocturnal voyage, expressly to procure you the pleasure of abjuring those vows which the lovely Seraphina de Mandax was simple enough to confide in.'

'O, my respected friend!' I exclaimed, falling upon his neck, 'what name have you pronounced!' — 'The name of an angel; the mention of whom should suffice to bring you back to the path of virtue. Let not an evanescent moment of weakness discourage you, and if possible prevent your imagination from obtaining the controul of your reason. What you have already felt, Don Juan, is but

the wanderings of the head; the evil has not yet extended to the heart. Confide in me, and I will undertake to cure the one and to preserve the other.'—'My venerable guide, I yield implicit obedience to your will in every respect.'—

"The too credulous Velasquez believed the promise, which my lips alone uttered; henceforward he was perfectly at his ease; and whilst I was secretly busied in deceiving him, my worthy friend unsuspectingly relied upon my honour.

"You may readily judge the impetuosity of my passion, my friends: I confess that the discovery of Sarah's condition produced no change in my schemes. I determined to obtain her heart at any price; and had the hand of a prophet unfurled the appalling picture of the misfortunes which re-

sulted from the indulgence of my fatal passion, I would not have abandoned my mad designs. I no sooner found myself alone, than I began to concert the means of again beholding Sarah. At first I could not hit upon any plan for the purpose, and several days elapsed ere I was enabled to arrange the chaos of my ideas. I was in that painful state of mind, in which, wholly occupied with a single object, I alike dreaded interruption and discovery, when some cruel demon, intent upon my ruin, removed the difficulties which stood in the way of my interview with the unfortunate Sarah.'

CHAP. XVI.

"THE Count de Porto, who had been long absent from Venice, was suddenly recalled thither in order to take his place in the council of twenty-six. His august functions, and my office of envoy extraordinary, naturally brought us together.

"The Count had been well acquainted with my father, when the latter sojourned at Venice, and being eager to form an intimacy with me, he invited me to his palace. Velasquez seem-

ed dissatisfied at this connection, and strongly recommended to me to be circumspect in my conduct, exacting a solemn promise from me that I would avoid every occasion of seeing Sarah.

"This oath, which my heart rejected, I impiously pronounced. I was introduced to the young Countess de Porto: she was certainly handsome, but her stiff and formal deportment partook neither of grace nor sensibility; her demeanour was haughty, her look aspiring; she might command admiration, but she never could win the softer affections that flow from the heart. At our first interview, I readily perceived that she wished to captivate me, and that she was pretty certain of success in this respect. Such vanity disgusted me, and I determined to mortify her. Alas! without knowing

it, I aggravated the misfortune of poor Sarah.

"The Count de Porto was flattered by the esteem which his daughter evinced towards me; our friendship hourly increased, and I soon became high in his confidence. For the space of a month I was almost constantly at the palace de Porto; but so strictly was I watched by Velasquez, the Count, and his daughter, that I found it impossible to obtain a glimpse of Sarah. I was nearly reduced to despair, when an unexpected incident changed the face of affairs. We were now on the eve of carnival; that season which the Venitians consecrate to games, diversions, debauchery, vengeance, and assassination; that season of intoxication, when hatred, long hidden under the mask of friendship, assumes the domino in order securely

to glut its horrid appetite. Knowing that his daughter was passionately fond of dancing, the Count de Porto resolved to give a ball in honour of her. I was invited to it of course; but Velasquez, on account of his profession, declined accompanying me thither. He, however, took care to recommend me to the attention of an elderly nobleman of his acquaintance, who smilingly observed that he would not let me dance too much with the beautiful Aurora. Alas! it was not of her I thought. After having danced much longer than my inclination prompted me, in order to lull suspicion, I at length contrived to slip out of the ball-room, and immediately exchanged my splendid attire for a plain domino. Then, profiting by the tumult and confusion which reigned in the palace, I proceeded to inspect

the different apartments it contained, with the hope of finding that of Sarah. I was convinced that the feeling maid, who took a secret delight in calling forth the echoes of the Brenta with the melancholy strains of the prophet of Sion, would not surely mingle with the joyous crowd of the ount's people. I was not deceived: a mild and tender voice, sorrowfully pronouncing the following moving complaint, filled my too sensitive heart at once with love, pity, rapture, and distress: 'Return, Adina, return to the mirthful society of your companions, and leave the hapless Sarah to weep in solitude. I do assure you that I stand more in need of repose than of pleasure.'—'My God, Miss,' returned the youthful Adina, 'why do you continue thus to weep alone, inacessible to consolation? Would you bring

yourself to an untimely grave?'—'Would to God, Adina, it were in my power to do so! did I not fear that some person might be implicated in my crime—O, Adina, Adina!'—'Good Heaven!' exclaimed the girl, 'you make me shudder! The Countess, nevertheless, says you would be so happy, if you were to enter a convent.'—'I will never break my vow,' replied Sarah.

"Here the conversation ended. Adina retired at a door directly opposite to that behind which I had concealed myself, and being now certain that the unhappy Sarah was alone, I gently opened the door, and entered her chamber. God! what an affecting sight met my view! Sarah, bathed in tears, was seated at a window, mournfully contemplating the joyous crowd that danced in the garden; one of her

lovely hands supported her drooping head, while the other pressed a portrait to her bosom.

"This attitude, whilst it excited my compassion, awakened my jealousy: the image which she bathed with her tears, was doubtless that of some beloved object.

"Was the ingrate absent, or had death snatched him from the view of the loveliest of women?—Agitated almost to frenzy, I instantly flung aside my disguise, and falling at the feet of Sarah, conjured her to moderate her anguish, and to acquaint me with its origin. The unhappy sufferer no sooner recognised me than she blushed deeply, and gently, repulsing my advances, intreated that I would leave her to the free indulgence of her grief. 'We may be surprised together,' said she weeping, 'and my reputation

in such case will be irrecoverably lost. Consider, sir, that her good name is Sarah's only inheritance; should you be the means of depriving me of that, it were better a thousand times that I had been buried in the deep from which you rescued me.'—These impressive words reminded me of the prophetic warnings of Velasquez, and my own protestations. I was staggered for a moment, and the voice of honour once more assailed my heart. Alas! this was the last time that the salutary monitor importuned me. Had I then hearkened to the request of Sarah, to the suggestions of conscience, to the generosity of the Count de Mandax, I should have been virtuous, and possibly happy. Misfortune would still perhaps have overtaken the victim, which, from, his birth, seemed destined to bear its stripes; but I should have

avoided the bitter pangs of remorse, which subsequently probed my heart to its very centre."—

"Here the pastor again paused, seemingly overcome by his feelings. A profound sigh, which involuntarily escaped him, evinced the situation of his mind, and Don Fernando suggested to him that it would be better to defer the conclusion of his sad tale to a future occasion; but the worthy Jerome, determining to accomplish his painful task forthwith, begged leave to resume the thread of his narrative, and after a considerable pause, proceeded thus:—"In order to allay the just fears of Sarah, I promised to leave the room instantaneously, in compliance with her wish, on condition, however, that she would give me an immediate meeting in the gardens of the palace, behind the

grotto of Belisarius. This appellation was bestowed upon a little edifice situated at the extremity of a retired avenue, over the door of which was placed a beautiful statue of the old Roman general, with the well known, but pathetic inscription: "*Date obolum Belisario.*"—In a voice scarcely audible, Sarah promised to grant my request; upon which I departed, leaving her my domino for her own security, and procuring another for mine. I now glided with due caution behind the edifice sacred to misfortune; an edifice so well calculated to produce serious reflections in any but the mind of an impassioned lover. I had seated myself upon a mossy bank, and was beginning to indulge in chimerical projects, when the silence which reigned around was suddenly broken by a voice which I immediately knew to be

that of Aurora, the Countess de Porto. Surprised at finding her so near me, whilst I supposed she was occupied with the pleasures of the dance, I determined upon ascertaining the motive of her conduct, and hearkening to the subject of her conversation. This was not very difficult; and to my utter astonishment, I soon heard the following dialogue pass between Aurora and old Bianchi.

Aurora. It is in vain to talk, Bianchi; Don Juan does not love me: my charms, which you tell me are irresistible, have not made the slightest impression on his rebellious heart, which doubtless is the property of another.—

Bianchi. But who, Madam, can be the object of his passion? I know that his hand has been promised, in Spain, to the daughter of a

powerful minister; but Paolo has assured me that his master never entertained any thing like affection for the person of Donna Seraphina; and that since his arrival at Venice, he has conceived a violent attachment to some person or other. Who can this person be, Madam, if not yourself?

Aurora. No, no, I cannot thus blind the eyes of my understanding; Don Juan, I well know, is in love, but not with Seraphina, or Aurora.

Bianchi. With whom then?

Aurora. With the most hateful of beings, with her who seems to exist only to render me miserable; her whom my hatred vainly pursues, and whose fate seems to triumph over all my schemes.—*Sarah.*

Bianchi. Sarah!—why he has seen her but once—on the evening that Georgio so miserably concerted his

scheme for drowning her. Our ill-luck would have it that Don Juan should be near to save her; but even then he only saw her by moon light, and I have since taken care to keep her closely confined.

Aurora. All that is unavailing. A single glance, I tell you, was sufficient to enflame two hearts destined to be my torment.

Bianchi. Nay, but what proofs have you, upon which to found this opinion?

Aurora. A thousand, which it would be too tedious to specify. You well know, Bianchi, what good reason I have to detest Sarah; the blood which flows in her veins, her claims upon the bounty of my father, her destructive charms, her unconquerable pride, the fondness of the Count towards her, all combine to render her hateful to

my sight. I have vowed her destruction; and you yourself, Bianchi, promised

Bianchi. But could I foresee

Aurora. Well let us speak no more of that fatal adventure. My first plan has proved abortive: I depend on you for framing another and an unfailing scheme.

Bianchi. Confide in my fidelity and attachment.—" At the conclusion of this infernal colloquy, the execrable couple separated.

"Blinded by their hatred, they passed close by without perceiving me; the darkness of the night, and the colour of my domino, at the same time, favouring my concealment. In the warmth of indignation, I had laid my hand upon the dreaded *rejon*, so fatal to the foe of the proud Castilian. I confess that for a moment I felt a

desire to immolate the monsters who dared coolly to form their diabolical projects, at the shrine of virtue and innocence; but the recollection of the sacred rights of hospitality withheld my avenging arm. I could not forget that I had been admitted into the house of the Count, rather as a son than a mere visitant, and this idea alone induced me to avert my eyes, and suffer the wretches to pass without molestation.

CHAP. XVII.

"SHORTLY after their departure, the unhappy object of their hatred drew near; her visage was pale, and she trembled violently. She sat down, remained for some moments quite motionless, and then bending her head upon her bosom, and shedding a torrent of tears, thus addressed me:—'O, Sir, why did you save me from the waters? were it not for your interference, I should now be happy;

my sufferings would be at an end.'—'Beauteous Sarah,' said I, clasping her cold hand within mine, 'the Merciful Being who sent me to your relief, would not permit the accomplishment of a hellish design, at which humanity shudders; he watched over you, Sarah, and his merciful eye is still fixed upon your fate. It is he, who inspires me with the tenderest compassion for your situation, with the most ardent affection for your lovely self! Sarah, I adore you; I know by what dangers you are encompassed; and I will brave them all for your sake; but in return you must confide in me.'—'I cannot;—the secret of my destiny concerns another beside myself;—I shall carry it to my grave!'—'Sarah, you love another; your heart is already given to another. I can no longer doubt

the fact. That portrait, that portrait which you bathed with your tears—
——'—'Is the likeness of my mother.' replied Sarah.—'Do not, I beseech you, Sir, form any suspicion injurious to my honour; I am unfortunate, but I have one consolation at least, and of this all the efforts of hatred cannot rob me,—*the consciousness that my fate is unmerited.*'—'Is it possible that your heart is free?'—'Ere I knew you, I was a stranger to love.'—'Delightful acknowledgment!—Pure and innocent, thy first amatory sigh will be devoted to me!' 'Signior Don Juan,' replied Sarah, while her tears flowed afresh, 'you doubtless forget, that the distance between us is infinite.'—'My love shall fill up the chasm, and your virtues shall be the reward of my disinterestedness!'—'I cannot harbour

so vain a hope,—what will the world say ?'—' I despise the opinion of the world !'—' But your father———'— ' He loves me, you will find that he loves me.'—'Yet your hand, they say, is promised to another.'—' It shall only accompany the gift of my heart, and that you possess.'—' May I not be the means of depriving you of an immense fortune ?'—' What I possess will suffice for our maintenance.'— ' I am persecuted by envy and hatred.'—' Love shall shield you against their attacks.'—' I cannot think of making you a sharer of my dangers.'—' I shall glory in braving them for your sake.'—' Don Juan, you scarcely know me as yet ; our acquaintance is so short, that———'— ' A moment's acquaintance with you suffices to insure you adoration.'—

'Can you be constant?'—'In life,—in death!'—'Consider to what a lowly capacity, weakness on the one hand, and hatred on the other, have reduced me.'—'Your noble mind triumphs over the lowliness of your state; and by placing you in your destined sphere of life, I shall only fulfil the designs of the Almighty.'—'Are you at liberty to put this into effect?'—'Who can hinder me?'—'The Count de Porto, and Don Henriquez.'—'To the one I do not owe a particle of respect, the other has never denied me any thing.'—'Your father may, perhaps, prove inflexible; and mine———'—'Your's! Gracious God! is the Count de Porto, then ———.'—'Unhappy Sarah! What have I said? My unguarded expression, alas! embraces the secret of my destiny; and of Aurora's ha-

tred. I can no longer conceal any thing from you; come hither to-morrow night, at the same hour, and, if I can effect it, I will meet you, and impart to you the sad story of my origin; if not, the good girl Adina will deliver you a manuscript containing the recital of my misfortunes. When you have read it, my fate will be in your hands, and it will remain for you to determine how you should proceed. Of this, however, be assured, that whatever propositions you think fit to make, must be ratified by the Count de Porto and your father, ere I can think of acceding to them. I would rather die before the face of my father in this palace, and by the hand of Aurora, than, like a guilty wretch, fly from the habitation of my ancestors. Farewell, Don Juan; to-morrow will decide our fate, and I shall then know

whether I am destined to be led by you to the altar, or consigned to the tomb of my mother'—"As she uttered these words in a firm and majestic tone, the lovely Sarah disappeared.

"It is impossible for me to describe the effect which the discovery she made had upon me; notwithstanding the veil of mystery, which still enveloped her destiny, I had heard enough to conclude, that the chief obstacles to our union might, by possibility, be removed. She was of noble birth; her father still loved her, and mine need not blush to call her daughter. The idea of dissent on the side of Don Henriquez never once entered my imagination; and I persuaded myself that I at length neared the port of happiness.

'After indulging in a deep reverie, in the very spot where I had

been told I was beloved, I returned to the dancers. The greater part of the crowd had already dispersed, the dance was supported with little spirit, the sports were nearly at an end, and even the music ceased to charm. I therefore took leave of the Count de Porto, and returned home with an agitated mind and a dissatisfied heart.

"The night I passed was equally uneasy, and on the following morning I endeavoured to escape the scrutinizing looks of Velasquez. This worthy friend noticed my embarrassment, and judging that I had again fallen, solicited a candid avowal. He could not obtain it, however; a prey to tumultuous and headstrong passions, my heart was insensible to the claims of friendship. He quitted me with a sigh; I could not help observing his grief, which, while it inspired me with

repentance, was incapable of enduing me with courage sufficient to acknowledge my faults, or to seek the advice of experience, as a preventative against future lapses.

"As the entertainment given by the Count de Porto was to last three days, I returned to his palace in the evening.

"The party was as numerous and as brilliant as on the preceding evening; I saw, I heard nothing, till the palace clock announced the appointed hour of meeting. Burning with impatience and curiosity, I secretly quitted the crowd, and repaired to the grotto of Belisarius.

"For a considerable period I vainly awaited the coming of Sarah;—she did not appear!—The sound of the distant music was momentarily wafted to my ear by the light breeze, and

favoured by the pale light of Cynthia, I beheld the joyous groups of shepherds and shepherdesses tripping lightly o'er the sward. 'Happiness smiles around me,' I exclaimed with a sigh, 'yet anguish tears my hapless bosom. O Sarah! Sarah! what keeps you from my view?'—'Duty and virgin modesty,' replied a voice, which I instantly recognised to be that of the Count. I was petrified with astonishment.

"The father of Sarah made me sit down beside him; and, after a pause, occasioned by our mutual embarrassment, thus addressed me in a friendly tone: 'I have long been aware of the signal service which you have rendered my poor Sarah; and a wish to testify my gratitude has induced me to cultivate your acquaintance. Nevertheless, since you first did me the

honour to pay me a visit, I have not had the courage to put a question to you so formidable to my unhappy foible. The passions of my early youth have placed me in a most embarrassing situation; I would fain fulfil all my duties, yet I find that I cannot accomplish any of them. I have suffered an interesting and a feeling being to be oppressed by a vain, haughty, and revengeful female; but she is my daughter The one I am bound to protect; the other I love;—yet both are miserable.

'When first we met, I did hope that the charms of Aurora might have captivated your senses, if not your heart; it was my wish that you should be united to her, and that the phantom of jealousy might thus be chased from her imagination. Fate has decreed it otherwise; you love Sarah;

her artless lips have imparted to me the secret of your passion, and of the tender return which her heart makes. In this situation of affairs, I am called upon to make you acquainted with her situation and with mine. If, after having heard my declaration, you still persist in your advances towards Sarah, and that your father countenances them, you shall be united, and my benediction shall accompany you to the hymeneal altar.

'As, however, my recital is rather long, and that I am necessitated to do the honours of the palace, in conjunction with my sister, I must crave your permission to defer entering upon it, till the entertainments are at an end. When order is once more restored to this residence, you can come, and dine with us in the family-way, and then I shall take an oppor-

tunity of satisfying your curiosity. In the mean time, my young friend, promise me that you will not attempt to see, or speak with Sarah.'—'And do you promise me, in your turn,' said I, with warmth, 'to defend her against the snares of envy and hatred.'—'Who would dare to injure her in the palace of her father?' demanded the Count.—'Who can say that the Brenta adventure may not be re-acted?'—'Good Heaven! you make me shudder.—Unhappy Sarah! have I delivered you into the hands of assassins!'—'It is too true. Why have you committed her to the custody of the detestable Bianchi?'—'She has brought her up from her infancy; she cannot but love Sarah.'—'You humiliate her so far as to leave her dependant upon the caprice of one who is in every respect her inferior,—in none

her equal.'—' The situation of Sarah in my family is certainly not splendid, neither is it menial. She has not, it is true, hitherto endured the torments of opulence, or the dangers of grandeur, nor has she imbibed the poison of flattery; do you, therefore, conclude that she is unhappy?'—' In one word,—is she dear to you?'—' The living image of her mother! and not dear to me!'—' You do not disapprove of our passion?'—' Count de Mandini, we shall meet again, three days hence.'—" So saying, the Count de Porto darted out of my sight; whilst I quitted the palace, and returned home in a happier frame of mind than ever.

" I had this night learned that the father of Sarah knew of, and approved, my passion; and he had assured me that in a few days' time I should be the depositary of his confidence. What

was there, then, to restrain me from grasping at that shadow of a shade which mankind denominate human felicity ?—Thus it was that I reasoned, while the fever of passion agitated my brain.

"Fernando, my friends,—how senseless is he, who can say to himself—I have betrayed my trust, I have broken my vows, I have outraged virtue!—yet what evil has ensued from all this? Soon will my sad example teach imprudent and guilty youth to know, how dreadful is the punishment inflicted upon him who listens only to the voice of passion. !

CHAP. XVIII.

" THE term of tumult and dissipation being over, the Count de Porto, according to promise, invited me to dinner to his delightful seat at San Felicio, and after a repast provided by friendship, rather than ostentation, he conducted me beneath the shade of an umbrageous poplar, and seating me beside him, spoke to the following effect, while tears trickled down his cheeks: 'I am, and ever have been,

Don Juan, the most unfortunate of men.

'At the age of eighteen a fatal passion robbed my conscience of repose, and filled my bosom with endless remorse. In as few words as possible, I shall detail to you the effects it had on the remainder of my life. At the age of eighteen, my father, confiding too implicity on the proofs I gave of precocious sense, sent me to the court of Lisbon, without friend, mentor, or guide. At this city I was to be placed under the care of a relation of my mother's, upon whose prudence and experience the Count de Porto conceived he might fully depend; but ere I reached Portugal, this person was no more. I had a letter of credit on an English banker, Sir Samuel Howe, who, like the generality of his nation, was a truly honest man, and from

whom I derived every assistance, and experienced all those attentions which a total stranger in a foreign city might be supposed to stand in need of. In return for his good nature, I was base enough to aim at winning the affections of Sarah, his only daughter; and in this attempt I readily succeeded.

'Sarah was wealthy and beautiful; uniting talents rarely to be met with in the female world, to virtues of the highest order. I ventured to think that, in consideration of such a combination of rare qualifications, my father would overlook the circumstance of her being the descendant of mechanics; but Sir Samuel, less confident in this respect, insisted upon my not visiting his daughter, till I should receive the answer of the Count de Porto, which, as he rightly judged,

proved unfavourable to my hopes. My father ordered me to return home forthwith; I disobeyed him, and determining to carry my point, so imposed upon the credulous Englishman, by fabricated letters, a manufactured consent, and well contrived falsities, that I obtained his daughter's hand.

'The Count de Porto was not informed of my impropriety till it was out of his power to prevent it, and out of mine to repair it. He, however, dissembled with me, feigned to overlook my conduct, and directed me to conduct my wife to Italy.

'Delighted at the idea of obtaining a father's benediction for her and myself, I took her from under the protection of her worthy sire, and in conformity to the orders I had received, conveyed her to an old castle belonging to our family, which was situated in

the mountains of Cadorino. Arrived at this desolate spot, I learned that the Count de Porto had departed thence, the day before our arrival, having received dispatches of the last importance from the Doge, requiring his immediate return to Venice. He had left magnificent presents for Sarah, and a letter for me, directing me to meet him at Venice, and stating that our stay there would not be very long, and that we should return thence together to the country. Incapable of entertaining the slightest suspicion of my father's conduct, and being desirous of demonstrating by my willing obedience how ready I was to please him, I parted from Sarah with a sorrowful heart, yet with hopes of a speedy return, and journeyed to the palace de Porto.

'The Count received me with the

utmost tenderness, talked much of Sarah, and descanted upon the probability of my soon becoming a father in my turn, at the same time expressing great impatience to behold his lovely daughter-in-law. Gratified with the seeming demonstrations of his affection, I would not so much as harbour an unpleasing reflection. I immediately communicated to my beloved partner what I conceived to be the happy state of our affairs, and though, notwithstanding the promises of the Count, we had already spent nearly a month at Venice, I had letters every day from Cadorino, and the stream of felicity seemed to flow smoothly. I comforted myself for so long an absence with the hope of soon again beholding my dearest Sarah; till at length one of my couriers re-

turned without bringing any letter from her.

'Bianchi, the keeper of the castle, however, sent me word, that the Countess de Porto suffered so much from the near approach of her lying-in, that she was unable to write to me; but that she intreated I would not be uneasy, as every possible attention should be paid her. This intelligence nearly drove me distracted, and I would instantly have set off with the courier, were it not that the Count most earnestly supplicated me to remain three days longer at Venice, in which time he should be enabled to conclude the affair which had called him thither. I yielded to his intreaties with much difficulty, and the courier set off, after receiving a long letter from me filled with expressions of love and uneasiness. The term of our stay

had already expired, and I now reminded the Count of his promise. He once more intreated that I would consent to stop till the end of the month; and with this request likewise I complied, although it cost my heart many pangs. Anxiety and suspicion soon took possession of my mind, and I was even meditating a secret flight from Venice, and determining to return alone to Cadorino, when I received a letter from Bianchi, informing me that Sarah was at the point of death, and had given birth to a daughter who only lived a few hours.

'At the receipt of these dreadful tidings, my despair broke forth in exclamations and maledictions, and I resolved instantly upon proceeding to the castle to assist my beloved wife, and bathe the breathless corpse of

my child with tears of paternal woe. The Count, who seemed to be nearly as much affected as myself, no longer opposed my wishes, but, on the contrary, had every thing prepared for the journey, and before evening we were on the road to Cadorino. Our progress was as rapid as I could wish; and my father, apparently a prey to sorrow, attempted not to break a deep and gloomy silence, except by endeavouring to prepare me for the worst that might happen. At length we arrived at the castle; but, O God! silence and sorrow now reigned in the place which I had left the abode of youth and beauty. I eagerly inquired for my wife, and was shewn a magnificent mausoleum.

'I called upon the sacred names of love and nature, and was answered by the gloomy nod of death. In vain

did I intreat for a single moment of illusion to save my brain from distraction, the sad truth echoed in the sable-clad apartments, " Sarah is no more !"

' I now lost all consciousness of my situation. A long and dangerous illness was the consequence of the shock I had received ; but in fine, by the attentions of the Count, the natural vigour of youth, the strength of my constitution, and, above all, the assistance of Providence, I was once more recalled to life, or rather to misery. So soon as my situation admitted of my being removed, my father conveyed me from the sad spot where I had lost my all ; and, in order to dissipate my sorrow, prevailed upon me to travel into foreign countries, condescending himself to be my companion.

' After a long absence from my na-

tive country, I returned home less melancholy and sad than I had set out. I was now in my twentieth year, highly favoured by nature and fortune, and of course many were eager to dispel the gloom which still pervaded my mind.—To effect this, a new attachment appeared the most likely mode, and on this occasion my choice was certainly in unison with the inclinations of my father. I conceived an affection for the beautiful Clementina de Bragadini, heiress to the most illustrious name in all Italy, to which splendid advantage she added many solid gifts. I was beloved by her, I solicited her hand in marriage, and I obtained it. Aurora was the only pledge of this propitious union. My father was desirous of an heir to his name, but Heaven did not hearken to his prayers in this respect. For

my part, so long as my gentle Clementina lived, I murmured not at the absence of heirs-male; and, in addition to this, I was passionately fond of my little Aurora, who, as she possessed the personal charms of her mother, would likewise, I ventured to hope, inherit her virtues. Doubtless, if Heaven had graciously pleased to spare the mother, the daughter would be very different from what she is; but my poor Clementina was unfortunately carried off at an early age by a deep decline, which baffled every power of medicine. Notwithstanding my affection for Aurora, I resolved to part with her, and to place her in a convent, for I was well convinced that my weakness with regard to her, added to the sorrow occasioned by the decease of Clementina, totally incapacitated me from superintending her

education. The plan I proposed to adopt was certainly the most prudent; but my father, who literally adored his grand-daughter, opposed my design, and it was at length settled that my sister should take charge of her education. My affection for Aurora does not render me blind to her imperfections; I well know them, and I bitterly lament them; but still I suffer myself to be wholly governed by one whom I love, yet cannot esteem. It now remains, my young friend, to make you acquainted with the marvellous history of the resurrection of the infant who, I was led to suppose, had died immediately after its birth, and whose loss I so long bewailed. I allude to Sarah, that tender victim, condemned by hatred to a privation of paternal affection, and who, were it not that her name, her fea-

tures, and her melodious voice recall to my mind the image of her departed mother, would constitute the prop of my declining age.

'The Count de Porto, satisfied with my absolute submission to his will, appeared happy in the bosom of his family, and his earthly career was prolonged much beyond my most sanguine expectations.

'Alas! the inevitable separation was at length destined to take place, and death developed that mystery which he had so long endeavoured to hide from me.

'On the eve of being torn from the world, remorse found access to his mind, and just ere he expired, he informed me, that, dreading lest his fortune should one day or other pass into the possession of the descendant of a tradesman, he had given out a

report of the death of my daughter Sarah; adding, that the victim of pride still existed at Cadorino, where Bianchi had been instructed to bring her up as her niece.—"Your daughter," he added with a sigh, "is worthy, by her beauty, her virtues, and the sensibility of her mind, to re-ascend to that rank whence my hatred towards her unhappy mother has precipitated her. I would fain have carried this secret with me to the grave, but remorse got the better of my pride; yet even now I shudder whilst I yield to the mandate of Heaven, and the suggestions of conscience. After my death, Frederick, I would have you open your paternal bosom to the daughter of Sarah, and do you, dear Aurora, receive with due affection a sister whom my repentance restores to you, and join with her in endea-

vouring to render your father happy." Aurora, only answered her grandfather with tears: accustomed to read her heart, I readily discovered that the secret of Sarah's birth alarmed her pride, and gave rise to jealousy; but I trusted that the voice of nature, together with the dread of offending me, would ere long inspire her with more generous feelings after the decease of the Count. I lost no time in repairing to Cadorino, accompanied by my sister and Aurora; and there found Bianchi and her pretended niece, the latter a living picture of her mother.

'My heart alone would have recognised Sarah, could I have prevailed upon myself to enter the fatal castle, during the life-time of the Count. My daughter seemed to me all that paternal tenderness could desire; not-

withstanding which, a species of pride still rendered me unwilling publicly to acknowledge the first fault of my youth. To confess to my children that I had deceived my father and my wife, was, I imagined, a sure means to weaken their respect towards me. In order to avoid this humiliation, therefore, I was guardedly silent on the subject of Sarah's birth; and, leaving her at the castle with Bianchi, I returned to San Felicio in company with Aurora and her aunt. For a considerable period I continued to rack my brain as to the mode in which I should now proceed.

'Paternal tenderness, and justice itself, demanded that I should publicly acknowledge Sarah to be my daughter; this sacrifice, indeed, was due to the shade of her injured mother; but the counsels of my sister, and the anguish

of Aurora overcame the voice of nature, and the pleadings of equity, for a short period.

'At length, however, honour and a sense of duty obtained the victory over weakness, and I wrote to Bianchi to restore my daughter to my arms. I was absent from Venice, but designed to arrive there as soon as herself; when some untoward accident deranged my projects, and had it not been for your timely interposition, I should only have returned to bewail her loss. You appear to imagine, Don Juan, that the seeming accident which happened to poor Sarah, was the effect of a plot to take away her life.

'How frightful is such an idea to the mind of a parent! I, alas! believed that I might confide in Bianchi's attachment to her; else would I ever have placed Sarah in her power?" "I

afraid, Signior, that Bianchi is a traitress.' I replied.——'I have made enquiry upon the subject,' returned the Count, 'and I find that, contrary to my express orders, Bianchi left all my people in the palace, and conveyed the unfortunate Sarah to a hired gondola. When they had proceeded a little way, she ordered Sarah, (who still supposed herself to be the old woman's niece), to chaunt an air in the midst of a number of gondolas, which she had no sooner concluded, than a fellow jumped into the vessel, and exclaimed that he knew her by her voice, seized her violently, and flung her over board.

'From these circumstances I infer that Sarah is not in perfect safety under my roof; and now, having heard all I have to say, tell me what you think I had better do in order to

save my daughter from farther assaults, and, if it be possible, to produce the consummation of your mutual felicity ?'

CHAP. XIX.

"WHEN the Count de Porto had concluded his interesting narrative, I cast myself into his arms, and, without replying to his question, eagerly demanded, why, after forming such generous designs respecting his daughter, he prevented her from enjoying the same rank and honours as the Signora Aurora? The Count blushed, and replied, it was what he should do hereafter; and that he even determined to reveal the grand secret to

all his acquaintance during the recent festival, had not Sarah herself opposed his design, and even refused to fill the situation purposely left vacant for her. 'I believe,' continued the Count, that her mind was then too much occupied in thinking of you, to be accessible to mere vanity. Adina had been informed by your confidential servant, Paolo, of your passion for Sarah, of the fears of Velasquez upon the subject, and of the answers which the crafty Bianchi had induced my domestics to make to the inquiries of your prudent preceptor. Hence, concluding, that every hope of again beholding her deliverer was vain, the unhappy Sarah felt no wish to appear in the world, or to obtain that rank which she only valued as the means of bringing her near to the person of Count Mandini.'

" At these flattering and affecting words, I fell at the feet of the Count, and conjured him for pity's sake to publish the secret of his first marriage forthwith, and to bestow upon me the hand of Sarah. The Count smiled at my youthful warmth ; observing, that one of my requests might easily be complied with but ; that, ere he could hearken to the other, the consent of my father must be obtained. He promised that he himself would write to Count Mandini on the subject, and make him the most advantageous offers in order to accelerate the union.

" Tranquillized by this flattering promise, I returned to Venice. Here I found Velasquez just recovered from a fit of the gout which had disenabled him from accompanying me to Sans Felicio ; he did not seem at all satis-

fied with my conduct, and I sedulously concealed from him the hopes I entertained, the secrets imparted to me by the Count, and my fixed determination to forego my intended alliance with the family of Mandax.

"I immediately wrote to my father, inclosing a copy of those vouchers which confirmed the existence of Sarah, together with a full account of what had passed between me and De Porto at our last meeting.

"The Count de Porto, according to the promise he had given me, also wrote to my father in confirmation of my statement, and in short we left nothing undone to make the requisite impression on the heart and mind of Don Henriquez.--After this, the father of Sarah published a formal declaration of his marriage with Miss Howe, and of the birth of his daughter,

whom he finally introduced to his family and friends as the prime object of his hopes.

"Aurora, who witnessed this affecting ceremony, could scarcely contain her rage, jealousy, and hatred.

"The Count De Porto read the workings of her mind, and endeavoured to weaken the impulse of those baneful sentiments; but not succeeding in this, he took care to keep a watchful eye upon Aurora, in order to prevent a recurrence of the Brenta adventure.

"A few days subsequent to the departure of my courier for Madrid, I received dispatches from the Count de Mandax. Being, doubtless, informed by Velasquez of the danger which threatened me at Venice, he endeavoured to remove me thence, by stating, that the king was perfectly

satisfied with my diplomatic conduct, and was graciously pleased to grant me a situation immediately near his royal person, adding, that on the day I should receive the dispatches, it was his majesty's pleasure my ministerial functions should cease. 'The king expects you will return, without a moment's delay,' added Don Lopes; 'for he is anxious to see you; and I the more warmly participate in the wishes of his majesty, convinced that by your ready compliance with them, you will put a stop to certain reports equally injurious to your honour, and hurtful to my feelings.'

"I was careful not to shew this letter to the Count de Porto or Velasquez; but immediately replied to it, by informing Count de Mandax that I could not quit Venice till I should hear from my father on a subject

which deeply interested me, and concerning which I had lately written to him.

"I did not enter into further particulars with Don Lopes, nor in the course of my letter was the slightest mention made of Seraphina; for my mind, alas! was wholly occupied with the thoughts of Sarah.

"A few days after I had replied to to Count de Mandax's letter, I received the long expected epistle from my father; but, good God! what were my feelings, at finding that it contained a formal refusal to countenance my intended union with Sarah.

"In his letter to the Count de Porto, Don Henriquez stated the motive of his objection to the match, to be his respect for the solemn promise he had given Count de Mandax to unite me with his daughter, Donna

Seraphina, on my return home; but, in his reply to me, my father, with more truth and sincerity, stated his sole motive for declining the alliance arose from the low origin of Sarah's mother, and the species of mystery attached to the young lady's birth and education.

'The documents which you have sent me,' said Don Henriquez, 'are indeed sufficient to convince an upright, impartial man, of the legitimacy of the lady's birth; but it is not at all improbable that hereafter, wicked or envious persons, enemies to the house of De Porto, may think fit to propagate injurious reports, and to express certain doubts, with respect to the conduct of the Count and the birth of Sarah. To screen you, my son, from the danger of being forced to repel such calumnies with your sword,

to prevent your name from being tarnished by an alliance of such a nature, I hereby refuse my consent to your union with Count dePorto's daughter, and I order you forthwith to return hither in order to receive the hand of Seraphina de Mandax, so long betrothed to you. My son, obey the orders of the king who recalls you, those of your father who expects your return, the anxious wishes of the Count de Mandax, and the tears of Seraphina.'

"This letter threw me into an agony of rage and disappointment; but it had not the effect of shaking my firm resolve to obtain Sarah, and to make her mine upon any terms whatever. To deceive her father, to set my own at defiance, to carry off my fair prize, and to abandon Velasquez, were my first determinations.

"The execution of them appeared impossible, but my resolution was taken to vanquish every obstacle, in order to my being united with the woman of my heart.

"Whilst I was in this frame, news was brought me that Count de Porto had just been attacked by an apoplectic fit, and that his life was despaired of. Thunderstruck by this new and unexpected blow, I flew to the palace of the Count, whom I found absolutely senseless, and quite given over by the physicians. His apartment was full of people; some bewailing the loss of a benefactor, others a father, and many, in concert with myself, a generous friend.

"Aurora alone, with unmoistened eye and tranquil visage, issued her mandate with the pomp of a sovereign, and appeared more gratified by the

power about to devolve upon her by the death of her father, than afflicted at the irreparable loss she was on the point of sustaining.

"Sarah, the affectionate Sarah, different indeed from her flinty-hearted sister, was engaged in earnest prayer at the foot of her poor father's couch; her pallid cheeks, her quivering lips, and her dishevelled locks presenting the finest possible picture of intense anguish. This dolorous spectacle inseparably united my affections to those of Sarah. Like her I fell on my knees beside the inanimate form of Count de Porto, and solemnly vowed that I would preserve my life only to comfort and protect his hapless daughter: Sarah heard me, and raising her lately drooping head, fixed her streaming eyes upon me, saying: 'Your task will soon be accomplished,

Don Juan; the same vault will ere long inclose the remains of my poor father and myself.' I shuddered at the idea, and endeavoured to repel the dreadful image which it conjured up in my imagination.

"As the hapless Sarah spoke, Aurora regarded her with an air of triumph which seemed to express: 'You are right!'—Gracious Heaven, what did not this horrible look forebode! It seemed as if it were the death-warrant of Sarah and of me!

"O why did I not then hearken to the sad presentiment; why did I not remove Sarah beyond the reach of guilt and jealousy?—Had I done so, the horrid recollection of having caused her destruction would not poison the sad residue of my life!—I passed the remainder of the day with the Count de Porto, without any hope,

however, of his recovering his reason; but, to the surprise of every body, he became tolerably sensible towards evening. He cast a steady look around him, and at length perceiving me and Sarah, he made a sign for the rest to withdraw, as if he wished to speak to us in private.

"The silent mandate was instantly obeyed. As Aurora passed me, I heard her address these words to me, in an under tone: 'Tremble, Don Juan, at what you are going to do. It will decide your fate and that of your mistress. Tremble, I repeat, if you should obtain Sarah and my fortune through the weak policy of a death-bed repentance!'—She said no more, but her countenance spoke daggers.

"Left alone with the Count, he motioned us to draw near, and then addressed me to the following effect:

"My dear Don Juan, I die with regret, since I have not been able to confirm the happiness of Sarah. You fathom the motive of my just fears for her fate, and you are aware in what hands I leave her. If the reply of your father had arrived previous to the dreadful blow which is about to annihilate my frame, I would have consigned my daughter to the arms and protection of a husband; and should it yet arrive prior to my dissolution, this bed of woe shall be your nuptial altar. Could I but bless your union, I should die happy."

"Here the Count's strength was so much exhausted, that he was forced to pause; he had, however, said enough. Hope once more smiled upon me: regardless of the awful scene before me, fearless of the Divinity on whom I was about to call, re-

morseless for the treason I prepared to commit against Seraphina and her father, careless of incurring the wrath of an indulgent parent, and hearkening only to the voice of love and desire, I exclaimed: 'O my father, I have received the letter which allows me to claim the hand of Sarah, and I was coming hither to shew it you, when the dreadful news of your indisposition reached me.'

" As I uttered this horrid falsehood, Sarah looked at me, whilst a feeble ray of pleasure illumined her pallid countenance. The Count likewise regarded me, and I, unappalled, sustained the look of expiring worth and that of innocence!

'My son,' said the Count, 'it is sufficient that you tell me so. I believe you. I once deceived a father, but I cannot think that you would follow my

example, at the risk of suffering the pangs of endless remorse.' Were it not for the danger of my situation, as well as that of Sarah, I would not propose to solemnize your union under such gloomy auspices ; but my daughter must be removed from a residence beset with perils. Make instant preparations for your departure and I will order every thing to be got ready for the performance of the holy ceremony. I prepared to obey ; but Sarah declared she would not quit her beloved father. 'I will have you near me,' replied the latter, 'so long as my bosom throbs with a paternal motion. But when all is over, my children, I would have you abandon my cold remains, and save my dear Sarah from the hands of her sworn foe.'

"As the Count concluded this moving injunction, I withdrew, promis-

ing to return before midnight to receive the nuptial benediction of the chaplain.

"Permit me, my friends, to make a pause in this tedious recital; I have need to collect my ideas, and to summon fortitude to my aid, ere I can retrace the dreadful catastrophe, with which you are about to be made acquainted."

So saying, the pastor of the mountain took leave of his friends, promising to resume his narrative on the following day.

END OF THE FIRST VOLUME.

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